

B. XVI. 16 B. N^o 6. St. Pauls
Gul. H. N. C.

FORTY
SERMONS,

WHEREOF

Twenty one are now first publish'd,

The greatest part preach'd before

THE

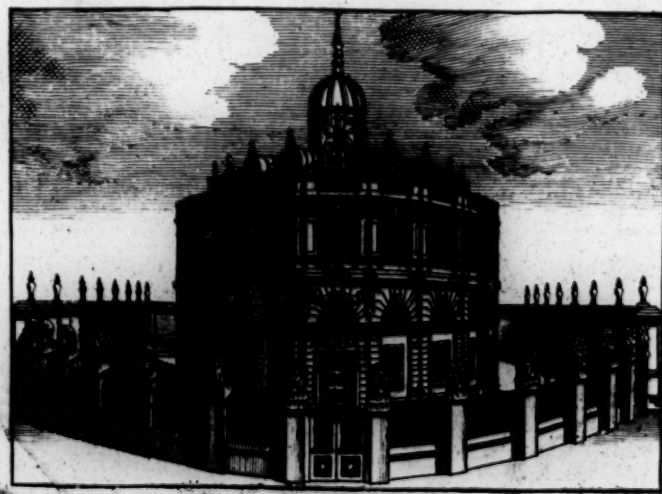
KING

AND

ON SOLEMN OCCASIONS,

By *RICHARD ALLESTREE D. D. Kings Professor in the
Chair of Divinity in the University of OXFORD, Provost of ETON,
and Chaplain to his MAJESTY.*

To these is prefixt an account of the Author's Life.



Printed at the THEATER in Oxford and in London, for R. Scott,
G. Wells, T. Sawbridge, R. Bentley, and Abel Swall at the
Unicorn at the west end of St. Pauls. M. DC. LXXXIV.

A. J. C. H.

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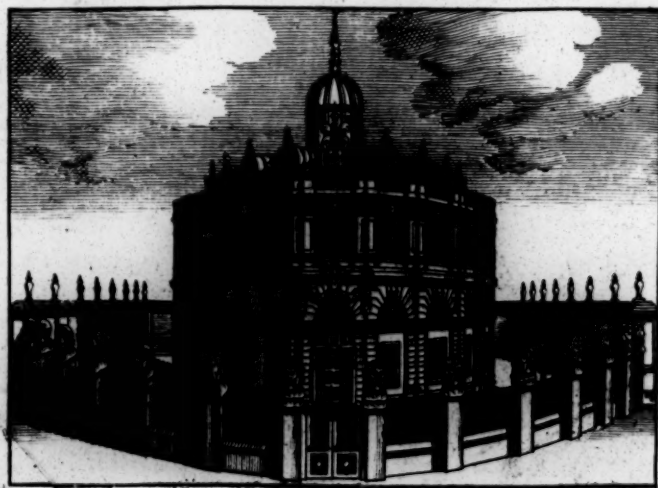
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K I M G



THE PREFACE.

IN all endeavors of persuasion, the credit of the Speaker being of as great moment as the inherent truth and evidence of what is spoke, it will be reasonable that there should go along with this large collection of Sermons, some account of the Person who was the Author of them; for if it be made out, that they came from one of integrity and knowledge, who neither would deceive others, nor was likely to be deceiv'd himself; one who practic'd what he taught, and preacht to his own soul what he deliver'd to his Auditory, his discourses must carry with them a proportionable weight and value. That this narrative may be the more satisfactory, by being entire and particular, it shall take the Author from his infancy, and bring him to his grave, without the vain additions of flattery and ostentation, which he abhorr'd while alive, and therefore needs not being dead.

He was the Son of Robert Allestree, a Gentleman of an ancient family in Darbyshire, who being decaid in his fortune by the profuseness of his Predecessors, retain'd unto S^r. Richard Newport, afterward created Lord Newport Baron of high Arcol, in the quality of his Steward; and being married, settled himself at Uppington near the Wreken in Shropshire, where Richard Allestree, the person of whom we write, was born, in March An. 1619. He being grown up to be capable of institution, was sent to a neighbouring country free Schole, and from thence to another somewhat more celebrated, at Coventree, where he remain'd till he became fit for the University. In the year 1636 he was brought to Oxford by his Father, and plac'd a Commoner in Christ-Church, having for his Tutor M^r. Richard Busby, who since is D^r. Busby the eminent Master of Westminster Schole, and Prebend of that Church. Six moneths after his settlement in the University, D^r. Samuel Fell the Dean observing his parts and industry, made him Student

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of the College, which title he really answer'd by great and happy application to study, wherein he made remarkable improvements; as a testimony and encouragement of which, so soon as he had taken the degree of Batchelor of Arts, he was chose Moderator in Philosophy, and had the employment renew'd year by year, till the disturbances of the Kingdom interrupted the studies and repose of the University, putting them into Arms.

His Majesty in the year 1641 being by tumults driven from London, and issuing out his Commission of Aray into the several parts of the Nation, did also direct it to the University of Oxford, where it found an active and a ready obedience, as by the generality of the members of that place, so particularly by Mr. Allestree, who engag'd in the service, and continued in it till Sr. John Biron, afterwards the Lord Biron, (who was sent with a party of horse to support and countenance the Scholars in arms there,) withdrew from thence; He after a short stay was call'd off to join with Prince Rupert, and by the assistance of the loial Gentlemen of Worcestershire was receiv'd into that City, where he was prest by the Rebels forces; but the Prince came up seasonably to reinforce him, and thereupon follow'd the sharp fight in Poyick field near the aforesaid City, the unexpected success of which gave great consternation to the Rebels, who being Masters of the Mony, Forts and Magazeens of the Kingdom, hop'd to have carried all without a stroke. As many of the Scholars as could furnish themselves for a sudden march, went along with Sr. John Biron from Oxford; the others, among whom was Mr. Allestree, staid behind, and return'd to their Gowns and Studies.

Soon after this, the Lord Say with a party of the Rebels forces drew into Oxford, and plunder'd the Colleges of such plate as had not bin before sent to his Majesty, making enquiry after those who had bin forward to promote the King's service; on which occasion, and also a particular accident that then happen'd, Mr. Allestree was call'd in question. The occasion was this: at Christ-Church some of the Rebels attempted to break into the Treasury, and after a daies labor forced a passage into it; but met with nothing, except a single groat and a halter in the bottom of a large iron chest: enrag'd with that disappointment, they went to the Deanery, where having ransackt what they thought fit, they put it altogether in a chamber, lockt it up, and retir'd to their quarters, intending
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the next morning to return and dispose of their prize. But when they came, they found themselves defeated, and every thing remov'd to their hand. Upon examination it was discover'd that Mr. Allestree had a key of the Lodgings, the Dean and his family being withdrawn, and that Mr. Allestree's key had bin made use of in this enterprize: hereupon he was seiz'd, and notwithstanding all the defence he could make, had bin severely handled, but that the Earl of Essex call'd away the forces on the suddain, and so redeem'd him from their fury.

In October following, the King having strengthned himself at Shrewsbury with the supplies that came from the North, and Wales, and the Loial Gentlemen of other parts of the Nation, began his march towards London, and was met by the army of the Rebels, commanded by the Earl of Essex, in Keinton field in Warwickshire, where both armies engag'd: at this battail Mr. Allestree was present; after which, understanding that the King design'd immediatly to march to Oxford, and make his Court at the accustomed place, the Deane-ry at Christ-Church, which was in part left to his care in the absence of the Dean, hasting thither he was taken Prisoner by a party from Broughton house, which was garrison'd by the Lord Say for the Parliament. His confinement here was very short, the Garrison surrendring it self to the King's forces, who summon'd it in their passage.

The war being now form'd, and the King being return'd from the fight at Brainford, having made Oxford his head quarter, Mr. Allestree settled himself again to his study, and in the next Spring took his degree of Master of Arts; after which he was in great hazard of his life, being seiz'd by the pestilential disease which rag'd in the Garrison, and which was fatal to very many eminent men of all employments and conditions; and fell more severely upon him by reason of a relapse, which doubled the calamity and danger.

Having recover'd a little strength, he was engag'd to employ it in military service, the exigence of his Majesties affairs calling for the aid of all his Loial Subjects, and in particular the Scholars: and accordingly a Regiment of them was rais'd, who serv'd as Voluntiers without any pay or reward, and perform'd all duties not only in the Garrison, and sallies for the defence of it in case of attacques and sieges; but were also commanded upon parties abroad, and endur'd the fa-

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tigue of marches, and ill treatment of mean quarters, differing in nothing from the poor mercenary Soldier, besides their civility and justice to the country people while they staid with them, and paying them at departure: things so unusual, that when at their going off from quarters they offer'd their Landlords mony, they imagin'd it don in jest and abuse, and at last by finding it left with them, were convinc'd that it was don in earnest. In this Regiment Mr. Allestree, tho a Master of Arts and fellow of the College, thought it no disgrace to carry a musket, and perform all duties of a common Soldier, forward upon all occasions to put himself into action. And in this service he continued till the unhappy end of the war, gaining still what time was left from military duties, to the prosecution of his studies: nay joining both together, frequently holding his musket in one hand and book in the other, and making the watchings of a Soldier the lucubrations of a Student.

But then when carnal weapons prov'd frustrate, and Divine Providence call'd his servants to the more Christian exercises of prayers and tears for the defence of the King and the Church, Mr. Allestree wholly betook himself to these, and put himself into that warfare, to which his former education had design'd him: entring into Holy Orders, at a time when there was no prospect of temporal advantage; and his being in the service of God threatned no less danger, than his having bin in the service of his Prince.

In that little interval of safety, which the Articles of Oxford gave, and was for some time continued, while the two factions of the Rebels were in contest who should divide the spoil of the Nation, and enjoy the price of blood; Mr. Allestree with great sedulity addicted himself unto his studies, and became a Tutor of many young Gentlemen and other Students; which trust he discharg'd with great sufficiency, as he did also the office of Censor in the College: moreover he bore a part in the signal test of the Loyalty of the University of Oxford, possibly the greatest that has bin given by any society of men; I mean the passing of the solemn Decree and Judgement of theirs against the Covenant and Rebellion enflamed and fomented by it, perform'd in Convocation, when the City was held by a Garrison of the Rebels, whose swords were at the throats of those Confessors, and yet the decree was carried by a most unanimous suffrage of the whole

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whole body, there being but one dissenter in that numerous Senate, and he a person who had absented himself from the University during the war, and taken part with the Rebels.

Soon after which great performance, the Visitors of the pretended Parliament being at last come with a second Commission to kill and take possession, having lost their first by outstaying in a long praier and sermon the time assign'd for the opening of it, began their enquiry, and did it not as one would have expected from men of Zeal and Godlineß, with an inspection into vice and immorality, but set their whole affair upon the short issue of submitting to the Authority of the pretended Parliament; and they who could prostitute their allegiance to their Prince, and oaths to the University, and their local Visitors, and comply with the lust of these Usurpers, tho never so flagitious, were immediatly receiv'd to favor: all others, however meriting, were without farther regard proscrib'd, the method whereof was, to write the names of as many as they thought fit to sacrifice at once in paper, and affix it upon the door of St. Maries Church, wherein 'twas signified, that the persons there nam'd were by the Authority of the Visitors banisht the University, and requir'd to depart the precincts thereof within three daies, upon pain of being taken for spies of war, and accordingly proceeded against. By which practice often repeted, the men of greatest hopes and merit in the University were spoil'd of all things, and not suffer'd to breath the common air; so that within the compass of few weeks an almost general riddance was made of the loial University of Oxford; in whose room succeeded an illiterate rabble, swept up from the plough tail, from shops and grammar Scholes, and the dregs of the neighbor University. Tho in that scandalous number, some few there were, who notwithstanding they had parts and learning, were prefer'd upon the account of their Relations; who merited a better title to the places they possesst, and have since prov'd useful men in the Church and State. Those of the ancient stock who were spar'd upon this trial, were afterwards cast off upon the second test of the engagement, till in the end there were left very few legitimate members in any of the Colleges.

In this diffusive ruin Mr. Allestree had an early share, being proscrib'd about the middle of July in the year 1648. And tho he had the care of several persons of quality his Pupils, and ac-

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counts of his own and theirs to make up; he with difficulty obtain'd from the Governor of the town Lieut. Coll. Kelsey a little respite, for his settling his affairs, and doing justice to those for whom he was concern'd; the Visitors utterly refusing his request, for this reason, as Dr. Rogers, one of their number was pleas'd to word it, because he was an eminent man.

Mr. Allestree being thus driven from Oxford, retir'd into Shropshire, and was entertain'd as Chaplain to the Honorable Francis Newport Esquire, now Viscount Newport, where he continu'd till such time as Richard Lord Newport the father died in France, whither he had some time before retir'd to avoid the insolence of the conquering Rebels. On this occasion Mr. Allestree was sent over to clear accounts, and see if any thing could be preserv'd from the inhospitable pretence of the droit d' Aubeine, which pillages those Strangers who happen to die in the French Dominions. Mr. Allestree having dispatcht this affair with good success, came back to his employment, and continued in it till his Majesties march into England with the Scotch Army, and his miraculous escape at Worcester; at which time the Managers of the King's affairs wanting an intelligent and faithful person to send over to his Majesty, desir'd Mr. Allestree to undertake the journey, which accordingly he did, and having attended the King at Roan and receiv'd his dispatches, he came back into England.

At his return he found his friends Mr. Dolben and Mr. Fell, the present Archbishop of York and Bishop of Oxford, who had likewise bin banisht the University, adventuring to sojourn privately there, and serve the uses of those who adher'd to the Church of England in performing Religious offices according to the order of the Church; whereupon he join'd himself to their assistance, and continued with them till such time as Sr. Antony Cope a loial young Gentleman of considerable quality and fortune in the County of Oxford, prevail'd upon him to live in his family; which he did for several years, having liberty to go or stay as his occasions requir'd, whereby he was enabled to step aside without notice upon messages from the King's friends; which service he manag'd with great courage and dexterity.

After several difficult journies succesfully perform'd, in the Winter before his Majesties happy restauration he was sent over into Flanders, from whence returning with letters, he upon his landing at Dover, was seiz'd by a party of Soldiers, who waited

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waited for him. *The Rebel's Spie*, who was employed by them in his Majesty's Court, having given notice of his dispatch; and describ'd particularly his person and his habit. But notwithstanding this diligence of the Rebels, Mr. Allestree had so much presence of mind, to secure his letters, and shift them into a faithful hand, who took care of them.

The Soldiers according to their orders guarded him to London, where he was examin'd by a Committee of the Council of Safety, and charg'd with having correspondence with the King, and having brought letters from him, which they backt with several circumstances of his journey, and threats of utmost severity in case he should persist in contumacy, and not confess the truth. But they not being able by questions to entrap, nor menaces to fright Mr. Allestree to betray either himself or others, he was sent Prisoner to Lambeth house, which was then made a goal for the King's friends, where by ill usage he contracted a sickness which was like to have cost him his life. After the durance of about six or eight weeks, his friends made means for his enlargement, which was the easier obtain'd, for that some of the Leaders of the Party, seeing things move towards his Majesty's restoration, were willing by kindnesses to recommend themselves in case of a revolution; among whom was the late Earl of Shaftsbury, who was us'd to value himself, that Mr. Allestree owed his preservation to him. Mr. Allestree having obtain'd liberty, return'd to Oxfordshire, from whence after a short stay he went into Shropshire to see his Relations; in his return from thence designing in his way to visit his excellent friend Dr. Hammond at Westwood near Worcester, he at the gate met the body of that great man carrying to his burial; which circumstance is therefore mention'd, because that eminent Light of the English Church, at his death gave this testimony not only of his kindness to Mr. Allestree, but also of his esteem of his parts and learning, that he left to him his Library of books as a Legacy, well knowing that in his hands they would be useful weapons for the defence of that cause he had during life so vigorously asserted.

The King being happily return'd, Mr. Allestree was soon after made Canon of Christ-Church, where he cheerfully concurr'd to the attemt, which was set on foot there for the repairing of those decaies and ruins which had bin made by the

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late Usurpers; for however those Godly Robbers who had invaded that Church and College, suffer'd them both almost to drop upon their heads, and without shame sawed down for firing the timber work of the North side of the great Quadrangle: the legitimate Children were concern'd first to clothe their Mother's nakedness, and not till that was provided for, consider their own.

Mr. Allestree at the same time undertook one of the Lectures of the City, thinking it might be a service to instil principles of Loyalty there after the contrary infusions of schismatical rebel Teachers, which for so many years had bin the Gospel of that place, discountenanc'd by none of the Parochial Ministers, besides Mr. Lamplugh the now Reverend Bishop of Exeter, who had the courage and loyalty there to own the Doctrines of the Church of England in the worst of times. This Lecture Mr. Allestree continued for several years, never receiving any part of the Salary belonging to it, but ordering that it should be distributed among the poor.

While he employ'd himself in popular preaching, he was also call'd to the service of the Court being the King's Chaplain, and also to the severer studies of Scholastical Learning, in his exercise for the degree of Doctor, and Moderator-ship in Divinity in the College; and soon after upon the vacancy of the chair of that faculty, to the laborious employment of Regius Professor in the University.

In the year 1665 the Provost-ship of Eton falling void, that honorable and beneficial employment was by his Majesty's especial grace and favor conferr'd upon him, to the acceptance whereof he was not without difficulty induc'd; and particularly the consideration that a great interest was made by a Lay man, who probably might succeed upon the advantage of his refusal, notwithstanding that the Provost there be actually the Parson of Eton Parish, and presented to the Cure, and instituted by the Bishop of Lincoln the Diocesan, as all other parish Priests are: so that as nothing could be more plainly sacrilegious and irregular in it self, than such an usurpation by a Lay person; so nothing could be a greater disservice to the Church, than by an unseasonable modesty to make way for it. Upon these motives it was, that Dr. Allestree became Provost of Eton; and for the same reason it was, that during his life he continued so, never hearkning to any offer of preferment, which

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which might make a vacancy, and repete the former hazard. And it may be truly said that this was the greatest secular care that he carried with him into another world, it being his dying request unto his friends, to interpose with his sacred Majesty, that he might have a Successor lawfully capable, and who would promote the welfare of the College.

The Succession in the Chair he more timely secur'd, for finding his health, and particularly his eie sight exceedingly impair'd by the toil of that employment, he resign'd it in the year 1679, and had the satisfaction to be succeeded by his friend Dr. Jane, of whose abilities he had perfect knowledge.

But diseases are not cur'd by the removal of the causes which first occasion'd them, and tho by the use of mineral waters in the Summer season, and the taking of journies in the Autumn, he for some time supported himself, the decay continued and encreast upon him, till it was form'd into a Dropsy; the prevalence of which was so great and suddain, that his Physicians advis'd him by all means to come up to London, where he might be neer their inspection and care; in compliance with whose desires more than from an expectation of cure, he went thither, and having taken a privat lodging, submitted himself to the methods they propos'd: in the mean time settling his litle temporal concerns; but was more intent upon his everlasting interests, employing those vacancies which his sickness gave, in attending the offices of the Church constantly read to him, and his private devotions; and when he saw his end approaching, in receiving the great Viaticum of the holy Sacrament: in reference whereto having desir'd those friends of his who happen'd to be in Town to communicat with him, the present Lord Archbishop of York, the Lord Bishop of London, the Lord Bishop of Lincoln, the Lord Bishop of Exeter, the Lord Bishop of St. Asaph, the Reverend Dr. Busby, Mr. Fell one of the Fellows of Eton who continued with him the whole time of his sickness: he afterwards took his last leave of them with great equanimity and constancy of mind, and waited for the hour of his release.

Having hitherto drawn together the series of actions and employments which made up our Authors life, it will not be amiss to set him in another light, and take a prospect of his mind and personal qualifications. As to his bodily appearance and outward features, as they are of less importance, so are

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they in recent memory, and by sculpture and other delineations are so generally known, that there will be no need they should be exprest by words.

His mind, that nobler part of him, was compos'd by an extraordinary indulgence of nature, those faculties which in others use to be single, and are thought necessarily to be so, as excluding each the other, were united in him. Memory, Phancy, Judgement, Elocution, great Modesty and no less Assurance, a comprehension of things, and fluency of words; an aptness for the pleasant, and sufficiency for the rugged parts of knowledge; a courage to encounter, and an industry to master all things, make up the Character of his happy genius. Which felicity of temper was seconded by the circumstances of the times in which he liv'd, which engag'd him severally to exert and cultivate his faculties. Before the national calamity of the civil war, he had secur'd the foundations of the whole circle of learning, by his own indefatigable study, as also the indulgent care of his Tutor Dr. Busby, than whom no person is more happy in the Arts of transfusing his knowledge into others; and the particular encouragement of Dr Fell the Dean, who alwaies lookt upon him as a part of his family, and treated him with the same concern as his own children.

When the war broke out, he had the benefit of being, instead of one, in several Universities; Oxford was then an Epitome of the whole Nation, and all the business of it: there was here the Court, the Garrison, the Flower of the Nobility and Gentry, Lawyers and Divines of all England. And times of action have somewhat peculiar in them to ferment and enliven the mind, which is enervated by the softness of peace. The calamitous times which succeeded, as they engag'd him to the exercise of popular preaching, a talent which nothing besides necessity and practice can cultivate; so they led him out into foreign parts, enter'd him into the managery of business of greatest trust and hazard, and made him as well read in Men, as in Books. After all this, it was no small advantage to be return'd by the King's happy restauration to the University, and to the opportunities of reading and conversation with learned men, and in that conspicuous Theater, to have the obligation of a public employment to exert all his faculties, and with utmost endeavor to improve and communicate his knowledge. And we may say it without envy, that few of his time had either a greater

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greater compass, or a deeper insight into all the parts of Learning; the modern and learned Languages, Rhetoric, Philosophy, Mathematics, History, Antiquity, Moral and Polemical Divinity, all which was not to be pumpt up, or ransackt out of common place books; but was ready at hand, digested for his own use, and communication in discourse to others.

From his first child-hood he had a strong impresson of Piety, and the Duties owed to God and Men, which next to Divine Grace may be ascrib'd to the strict and severe education which he had from his Father; a blessing that cannot be sufficiently valued, and on which he often reflected with a great sense of gratitude. Hereby notwithstanding the licence of war, and incitations of youth, he preserv'd his innocence, and love of God and vertue, till he made the more immediat service of them his profession. In his constitution he had a great deal of warmth and vigor, which made him apt to take fire upon provocation; but he was well aware of it, and kept a peculiar guard upon that weak part: so that his heat was reserv'd for the great concerns of the honor of God, and the service of his Prince and Country, wherein he was altogether indefatigable, and in the most dismal appearances of affairs would never desert them, nor despair of their restauration. There was not in the world a man of clearer Honesty and Courage; no temptation could bribe him to do a base thing, or terror affright him from the doing of a good one.

This made his friendships as lasting and inviolable as his life, without the dirty considerations of profit, or stie reserves of craft; not the pageantry of ceremonious address, or cold civility: much less the servile falseness of obsequious flattery. It was a solid and masculine kindness, a perfect coalition of affections and minds: so that there was nothing he possesst, but it was his friend's as absolutely as it was his own; and it became a general observation, that he and they had all things in common.

This temper of his directed him to live with great kindness with his Neighbors and acquaintance; so that Eton College, while he liv'd there, was but one family, his lodging being every Fellow's chamber, and they as much at home with him as in their own apartment. And in the University, tho his station and parts might object him to envy, he had no competition or difference with any person; so that no man ever liv'd with a more univer-

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sal good will of all that knew him, or died with a more general sorrow at his loss.

His conversation was alwaies cheerful and entertaining, especially in the reception of his acquaintance at his table, and friendly visits; and in the evening after he had wearied himself with the studies of the day, which he generally continued till eight of the clock at night, during the many years he held the Chair, soon after which he was to be call'd away to the night prayers of the College; this short interval he made as easy as he could to himself and those that were with him: and he had great reason to relax his mind at this time with a little cheerful discourse, there being no person who more literally verified the saying of the wise Man, that much study was a weariness to the flesh. After his daies work he was us'd to be as faint and spent, as if he had bin laboring all the time with the sithe or flail; and his intention of thought made such wast upon his spirits, that he was frequently in hazard, while at study, to fall into a swoon, and forc'd to rise from his seat, and walk about his room for some time, before he could recover himself.

To render secure from the inordination of intemperance, he frequently abstain'd from lawful satisfactions, by the stated returns of fasting and abstinence; and continuance in celibacy during his whole life. Nor had his singular abilities and endowments the usual effect to make him proud and contemptuous; all his discourses were with deference and respect, and were spoke with weight becoming a Professor, but the softness of a Learner.

*In his conversation he was exceedingly tender of saying any thing that might administer offence, or reflect upon any ones reputation; and most ready, in case of resentment, to give the person aggriev'd, whoever he happen'd to be, the utmost satisfaction. A remarkable proof hereof is his dealing with one who had taken part with the Rebels in the late war, and who was said to have don an act of cruelty therein, which Dr. Allestree in a private discourse had chanc'd to mention. The party concern'd hearing hereof, wrote to the Doctor, professing his innocence, and charging him with uncharitableness in believing, and injustice in reporting such an untruth. Hereupon, notwithstanding that the matter of fact had for about thirty years gon on as common fame, and also had bin charg'd in print, and
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that collateral evidence by a person now alive and a sufferer from the same hand, had bin produc'd to enforce the probability, and that here nothing was asserted but on the credit of what had bin formerly heard; yet Dr. Allestree by letter desir'd the said Complainant's pardon: who, without regard to the laws of civility, printed it as a vindication of his innocence, when indeed it was rather a proof of the Doctor's candor, and an evidence that the Complainant wanted better arguments for his defence. But it were to be wisht that they who were in their youth so unhappy to be engag'd in an ill cause, would spend their old age, which God's and the King's mercy has given them, rather in repenting of what they have don amiss, than in contesting what they have not don; and would more busy themselves in humble retractions, than passionat Apologies.

His content of the world was very extraordinary, as in his large and constant charities, both by settled Pensions to indigent persons and families, and occasional Alms; so also his bounteous hospitality, which will need no attestation, being perform'd in so conspicuous a Scene as Eton, and in the view of Windsor, which for several years his Majesty has favor'd with his Court and Presence. Yet a higher instance hereof will be his giving away a fixt and constant revenue that he might have fairly retain'd, to the value of above three hundred pounds by the year; the particulars whereof are thus.

At his Majesties return, as we have intimated, he was made Canon of Christ-Church in Oxford, and soon after King's Professor in the Chair of Divinity, to which emploiment a Canonry in the said Church, and the Rectory of Ewe Elme in the said County and Diocess are annext, so that the profit of two Canonries and the Rectory belong'd to him, and being earn'd with the labor of that weighty charge, no one who made a just estimate of things, would have envied it to him; but he regretted it to himself, and for several years gave the whole profit of one of his Canonries to the repairs of the College: and afterwards being mov'd by the right reverend Father in God the Lord Bishop of Winchester, in the behalf of an ancient Student of the College, who was destitute of a suitable support, he entirely quitted the advantage of the aforesaid Canonry to him. And as to the Living, he never receiv'd a penny from it, but left it to a friend, whose circumstances requir'd such an accession.

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The revenue of Eton had a suitable disposal, the west side of the outward court of the College being built from the ground and finish'd at his single expence. And whereas at his coming to Eton, he found the Society dipt in a great debt, by an ill custom brought in by the pretended godly men of the late times, who at the year's end divided what ever mony remain'd after the ordinary payments were discharg'd, incidental ones and debts contracted being still thrown off to the future year; which in time grew to a bulk, that endanger'd the College's becoming bankrupt. To remedy this he by an exemplary retrenchment of his own dues, prevail'd on the Society to do the like, so that within few years the College has paid above a thousand pound debt, expended above two thousand pound in repairs, and every day goes on to do things honorable and beneficial to the Society.

It may not here be omitted, tho it be an instance of lesser moment, that the Edition of the first Volume of these Sermons was entirely upon an account of Charity. For his ingenious Kinsman Mr. James Allestree the Book-seller, from a plentiful fortune being by the fire of London reduc'd to great poverty, Dr. Allestree, besides other assistances, bestow'd upon him the copies of eighteen of his Sermons, to make some reparation to his losses.

But the uncontrollable proof of contempt of the world, is the dying poor, and not to have collected any thing against the hazards of fortune, and commonly pretended exigences of old age and sickness; which was in a remarkable manner Dr. Allestree's case, he having never during his life purchast an inch of ground, nor any annuity or lease to the value of a penny; nor did he take care to renew the patrimonial estate which he held by a lease for life, tho it were the place of his birth, which generally gives an endearment, and a desire to continue the possession. Thereby, as the Author to the Hebrews expresses it, sojourning in the earth as in a strange country, and shewing plainly that he lookt for a better one, and a city which has foundations whose builder and maker is God.

His greatest treasure was his Library, which was indeed a considerable one, both for the number of Books and choice of them; but these he dispos'd of by deed before his death to the University of Oxford for the use of his Successors in the Chair. So that his Executors had only his personal estate to share among them, which he took to be so inconsiderable, that he thought

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I thought it not worth the formality of a Will; but designing, after the distributing some little remembrances among his friends, that small pittance which remain'd to his Relations, conceiv'd that the Law by an Administration would of course divide it among them. But being told by his Friend, to whom he communicated this purpose of his, that in this malicious world the dying intestate would be a thing of ill fame, and interpreted the product of an unwillingness to think of death, or part with what he had: and that what he so left would come less obligingly to his Relations, and probably would occasion contention among them: he took the advice, and by Will dispos'd of such Legacies as he thought fit to leave to the poor and to his friends, and gave the remainder among his sisters and their children.

Tho he hung thus loose from the world, he neither was negligent in secular affairs, nor unskilful in the managery of them; which was made manifest by his dextrous discharge of the private trusts committed to him in behalf of his dead friends, and the administration of his public employments. He was for several years Tresurer of Christ-Church, in a busy time of their repairing of the ruins made by the entruding Usurpers; and amidst the necessary avocations of study, found leisure for a full discharge of that troublesom employment.

The College of Eton, as I intimated before, he found in a very ill condition as to its revenue and fabric, and what was no less a mischief, unstatutable and unreasonable grants of Leases; to all which, excepting one, whose reduction must be the work of time, he applied effectual remedies. The Schole he found in a low condition, but by his prudence in the choice of a learned, discreet and diligent Master; by his interest, in bringing young Gentlemen and Persons of Quality thither, and by his great kindness to them when there; and taking care for the building fit accommodation for their reception within the precincts of the College, in few years the Schole grew into that great reputation and credit which it yet maintains.

And here we may not pass by another considerable service don in behalf of the said Schole, and also King's College in Cambridge, whose Seminary it is: that whereas both those Societies were formerly under the discouragement, that the Fellowships of Eton were generally dispos'd of to persons of foreign education; by the vigorous interposition of Dr. Allestree added to

THE PREFACE.

the petition of the Provost and Fellows of King's College, his sacred Majesty was pleas'd to pass a grant under the broad Seal, that in all future times five of the seven Fellows should be such as had bin bred in Eton Schole, and were Fellows of King's College, which has ever since took place, and will be a perpetual incitement to diligent study, and vertuous endeavor in both those roial foundations.

In the managery of the business of the Chair of Divinity, as he performed the Scholastic part with great sufficiency in exact and dextrous untying the knots of argument, and solid determination of controverted points, so that he was not oppress'd by the fame of any of his most eminent Predecessors: his prudence was very remarkable in the choice of subjects to be treated on; for he wasted not time and opportunity in the barren insignificant parts of Schole Divinity, but insisted on the fundamental grounds of controversy, between the Church of England, and the most formidable Enemies thereof. With an equal steddiness he asserted the Gospel truth, against the usurpations of Rome, the innovations of Geneva, the blasphemies of Cracow, and the monsters of our own Malmsbury, never intermeddling with the unfathomable abyss of God's decrees, the indeterminate five points; which in all times and in all countries wherever they have happen'd to be debated, past from the Scholes to the State, and shock'd the government and public peace. By his judicious care herein, tho he found the University in a ferment, and a great part of its growing hopes sufficiently season'd with ill prepossessions, he so brought it to pass, that during the whole tract of seventeen years that he held the Chair, there was no factious bandying of opinions, nor petulant sidings on the account of them; which thing disturb'd the peace of the last age, and help'd forward to inflame those animosities, which ended in the execrable mischeifs of the civil war.

There is nothing at this day which learned men more desire or call for, than the publishing of those Lectures, which were heard, when first read, with the greatest satisfaction of the Auditory; it may therefore be fit to give some account of the reason why those expectations are defeated, which in short is this. Dr. Allestree a little before his death having communicated to the Bishop of Oxford several particulars concerning his intentions for the disposal of his goods and papers, the Bishop observ'd that there was no mention made of his Lectures, and knowing

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knowing how his modesty had during his life resisted all importunities for the publishing of them, suspected that the same motive might be more prevalent at his death; therefore he wrote to him thereupon, desiring him that his Lectures might be preserv'd, which had cost him so much study and labor, and would be useful proportionably to others. His answer by letter bearing date Jan. 19. 1680. was, that having not had opportunity to revise what he had written, which was not every where consistent with his present imaginations, tho in nothing material, yet in some particulars which he should have better examin'd; especially diverse of the Act Lectures, which being upon the same head, the thred of them was not right nor didactical, and *Nectarius's* Penitentiary not expounded the same way in one place as in another, and the first blundring and not true: therefore he adds, that if the Bishop had not writ, and for that he himself would not go out of the world without satisfying him in every thing, he had resolv'd to have sent for his papers and burnt them; but now he gave them up all to the Bishop upon this inviolable trust, that nothing of them should be publish'd as a Scheme of his, but to be made use of to serve any other design the Bishop should think fit. Dr. Allestree's words are here transcrib'd, for that the plainest account of things is alwaies the most satisfactory.

His Sermons not lying under the same interdict, so many of them as were thought needful to make up a Volume, are here publish'd. The variety of Auditors for whom they were first design'd, makes them not to be all of the same finess of spinning and closeness of texture: but in them all there will appear the same spirit of perswasive Rhetoric and ardent piety, whereby tho dead he yet speaketh.

Upon the 28th. day of January in the year 1680. this excellent person after a life spent in indefatigable studies, and faithful endeavors for his Religion, his King and Country, and after the patient sufferance of a long and painful sickness, with Christian resignation and full assurance, render'd his soul into the hands of God; and on the first of February was decently interr'd in the Chore of the Collegiat Church at Eton, where his Executors erected to his memory a Monument of white Marble with the following inscription.

H. S. I.

RICARDUS ALLESTREE

Cathedræ Theologicæ in Universitate Oxoniensi

Professor Regius,

Ecclesiæ Christi ibidem Præbendarius,

&

Collegii hujus Ætonensis Præpositus;

Muniis istis singulis ita par, ut & omnibus major.

In

Disputationibus irrefragabilis, Concionibus flexanimus,

Negotiis solers, Vita integer, Pietate sanctus.

Episcopales infulas eadem industria evitavit,

Qua alii ambiunt;

Cui rectius visum,

Ecclesiam defendere, instruere, ornare,

Quam regere.

Laboribus studiisque perpetuis exhaustus,

Morte, si quis alius, præmatura,

Obiit Vir desideratissimus

Januarii XXVII. An. M. DC. LXXX.

Ætatis LX.

Nobile sibi monumentum,

Areæ adjacentis latus occidentale,

Quod à fundamentis propriis impensis struxit,

Vivus sibi statuit.

Brevem hanc Tabellam Hæredes defuncto posuere.

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The First
SERMON,
 Preached at
WHITE-HALL.

January 27. 1660.

I PET. IV. 1.

*He that hath suffered in the Flesh, hath ceased
 from Sin.*



O great a flatterer is Man of himself, that from all kind of Events, how various soever, he will adventure to conclude himself in the right way to *Blessedness*; and rather than want Argument, contradictions shall conspire to make him happy. If he prosper, then *God allows his doings*; and the success of actions is his *mark and Seal*, that they are acceptable and dear to Him: And if this Argument be good, The *Tribe of Benjamin while it conquer'd* (as they did Conquer those that fought *Gods Battels*; and that by his immediate *commission*;) yet *Judges xx. 18, 21, 23, 25.* all that while, those *Sodomites and foul Adulterers*, the men of *Gibeah* were *Saints*; But when calamity does take away this Argument, then on the other side the *Gibbet*; though the punishment of *Villany*, is only execution of that Decree, whereby *God hath predestinated them, To be conform'd to the Image of his Son.* *Rom. viii.* As if they died most like *Christ*, who died with the most *Guilt* about them, and they will needs be *Martyrs* when they suffer for their vices; and, if this Argument be good, *Ægypt* was *blest* with all her *Plagues*, and the *consuming fire* that ran upon the ground, was the *light of God's countenance* upon them. Yet both these Arguments have been made use of lately, by each several party of us, in the variety of *Gods dispensations* to us. Now this each could not do of right. Some Parties of us made *false and unjust* pleas to them both. Now to decide which did so, not *a priori*, from the *cause*; though that alone does guild prosperity, and that alone too makes the *Martyr*, not the sufferings.

sufferings. But men will never be agreed of that, while whatsoever happens (whether their cause prosper or be oppress'd) still proves them in the *right*. But I shall do it from a plain *notorious* effect: nor do I know what else can be more seasonable than while some men seem to stand *candidates* for sufferings, and choose *Sedition* and *Schism*, rather than lose the reputation of not being *afflicted* with their Party; and while others plead the merits of *affliction*, and trumpet out their having *suffered*, as a pretence for the *ambition* and the *covetousness*, the *luxuries* and *intemperance*, and all the other vices of *prosperity*, which their late *sufferings* have before-hand expiated; while it is thus on each side, to give both a *κρίσιον* whereby to judge the Case, which my Text here presents; for, *He that hath suffered in the Flesh, hath ceased from Sin.*

The words make a single *Proposition*, and therefore cannot well be taken asunder, nor indeed need they; the Terms being very well understood. The Subject every one is willing to assume to himself; no one I believe that hears me, but will say *he hath suffer'd in the Flesh*. Therefore we have no more to do, but to see whether the other Term agree as universally, which certainly it must, if our *Proposition* here hold good, if *He that hath suffered in the Flesh, hath ceased from Sin.*

Therefore in order to this, I shall offer at Three things.

First; Discourse of the truth of the *Proposition* in General, and see if we can discern how necessary, and how effectual this Instrument of *Reformation* is, whether it be such as may build a confidence of asserting; That *He who hath suffered, hath ceased from Sin.*

Secondly; Because discoursing in General, is not so *practical* and *useful*, I shall endeavour to discover in particular, By what Artifice of method the *Flesh* engageth men into courses of *sin*, and how it works them up to the *height* of it, and then see how *sufferings* blast that method, and make the *Arts* of the *flesh* either unpracticable, or too weak.

Thirdly; I will attempt to view our own concerns in all this; propose to consideration, Whether this method hath had this effect on us; or, Whether indeed it be as easie to confute God's *Word*, as to break his *Commandments*, and contrive that his *truth* shall no more stand than his *will* does; but notwithstanding Scriptures bold affirmation here, yet *they that have suffered have not ceas'd from Sin*; and if so, then to propose the danger and infer Christ's Application that at least we begin to cease, and *sin no more lest a worse thing come unto us.*

I. *He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from Sin: None but He, and He certainly:*

When it appear'd that *Eden* had too much of *Garden* for *innocence* to dwell in, and although man were made *upright*, yet amidst such delights he could not be so a whole day, but of the many *inventions* he found out, the first was to *destroy* himself immediately, and under the shadow of the Tree of *life* he wrought out *death*, and made the Walks of *Paradise* lead him towards *Hell*: God saw himself concern'd to take another course: He sets a guard of *fire* about *Eden*, about the place of *pleasure*, as well as in the place of *torments*; and there was as much need of *flame* to keep man out of *Paradise*, as *flame* to fright him from *Hell*. He makes the Earth not spring with *Garden* any more, but bring forth *thorns* and *briars*, that might scratch and tear man in the pursuit of things below,

low, which, if the Soul should *cleave* and *cling* unto the Earth, might gore and stab it in the embrace; Nothing but *sufferings* will do us good: The Earth was most accurst to man when it was all *Paradise*, nothing but the *malediction* could make it safe and bless it to us; our happinels must be *inflicted*, *executed* on us, and we must be *goaded* into *blessedness*: and therefore God hath put *afflictions* into every dispensation since the first. Among the *Jews* sin did receive immediate punishment by the tenour of the *Covenant*, and though the retributions of our *Covenant* be set at distance, as far remote as *Hell*, yet Christ has *dress'd* his very *promises* in *sackcloth* and in *ashes*, *tears* and *trouble*: when he would recompence *heroick* vertue, he says it shall receive *an hundred fold* with *persecution*, *Mar. x. 30.* and he does *grant us sufferings*; *To you it is given in the behalf of Christ to suffer*: *Phil. i. 29.* so that the *sting* of the *Serpent* is now the *tempter*; his *bitings* and his *venom* moving us to *obedience*, as much as his *lying* tongue did our first Parents to *rebellion*, and when he does fulfill Gods threat and *wound the heel*, he only drives us faster away from him, and makes us haste to him that *flies* to meet us with *healing under his wings*. This method God hath always us'd, and the experience confirm'd by the blood of all Ages, even from the blood of *righteous Abel* to the blood of *this season*: of all the *Prophets* that went before us, and the *Apostles* that came after them, as if those were men *inspir'd for ruine*, and what ever Judgment they denounc'd, it was their own *burden*; and as if these were men chosen out for, and delegated to *Persecution*, men appointed unto *death*, as *St. Paul* expounds their Office, none escap'd: and the next succeeding times of *Primitive Christianity* were but *Centuries of Martyrdom*, so many years of *Fire* and *Faggot*, and *worse* tortures. This method hath not *past* by any *Grandeur*, but of those great ones that have been eminently good, their *afflictions* have vy'd with their *Majesty*, the *Calendar* hath had as much share of them as the *Chronicle*, the *Martyrology* as the *Annals*, and their *blood*, not their *Purple* put them in the *Rubrick*. Gods *Furnace* made *Crowns* splendid, gave them a *Majesty* of *shine*, and an *Imperial* glory, and so all our *Crowns* indeed must be prepar'd in the *Furnace*; he that told us we must be *Baptiz'd with fire*, saw there was something in us that the *Christians* water will not cleanse; *Baptism* may wash *fullays* but not *drofs* away, That must be washt in *flame*, and nothing else but *fire* will take away our base alloy. And it cannot be otherwise, never was there any other way to *Glory*: for when God was to bring many *Sons* to *glory*, he *sanctified* the very *Captain* of our *salvation* through *sufferings*. *Heb. ii. 10.* Who though he were a *Son*, and that the *Son of God*, yet *learned* he *obedience* by the things that he *suffered*, *Heb. v. v.8.* This therefore is the only and most *effectual* way of teaching it, when God speaks in *Judgment*: and indeed he counts all other of his *Voices* but as *silence* in comparison of this; and though he gave his *Law* in *Thunder*, and sent his *Prophets* dayly to denounce wrath to *transgression*, yet he reckons of all this as if he had said nothing till he speak *Plagues* and command *afflictions*; *Psal. l. 21.* after a *Catalogue* of *sins* he tells the man, *these things hast thou done and I kept silence*; though my *Law* did warn thee, and my *Messengers* call'd to thee, yet I hardly expect that thou shouldst hear those *whispers*, with all those *Voices* I did scarce break *silence*; but now I will *reprove* thee, and thou shalt bear the *rod* or bear thy own *groans* under it: For *Micah. vi. 9.*

that we may be sure to hear this Voice, God does by it open the ear, Job xxxiii. 14, 15, 16. *God speaks once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not, in a dream and in a vision, then he opens the ears of men by Chastisements*, as it follows in four Verses full of them, 91, 20, 21, 22. *and sealeth his instruction that he may withdraw Man from his purpose, i. e. that he may make him cease from sin.* It seems the place of Dragons is Gods chiefest School of Repentance; and we may have a clearer sight of him in the dimness of anguish, than Vision it self does give. When men did not perceive that, saith Job, yet this open'd the Ear, and so God sealeth the Instruction: And truly when the Soul dissolves in Tears, and when, as David words it. *The heart in the midst of the body is even like melting wax, then only 'tis susceptible of Impression*, then is the time for sealing the Instruction. Nor does Chastisement open the Ear only, but the Understanding also; I will give her trouble, *δυναμιζαὶ σὺν τῷ*, I will take her into the Wilderness *ואצרכה על-לב* saith he, and speak unto her Heart; There is convincing Experience of all this. Pharaoh that was an Atheist in Prosperity, does beg for Prayers in Adversity; before he suffers, Pharaoh says, *Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*, Exod. v. v. 2. but yet Thunder preaches obedience into him, and Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron and said, *I have sinned, the Lord is righteous, and I and my People are wicked, intreat the Lord that there be no more mighty Thundrings*, (no more Voices of God, the Hebrew words *it*) and I will let you go, Exod. ix. 27. And in the Book of Judges you will find that whole Age was nothing but a vicissitude of sinning and suffering, divided betwixt Idolatry and Calamity. When Gods hand was not on them they ran after other Gods, as if to be freed from Oppression had been to be set free from Gods Worship and Service; but when he did return to slay them, then they sought him, and they returned to enquire early after God, and they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God was their Redeemer. Psal. lxxviii. 34, 35. So that from such induction the Prophet might pronounce, that *when Gods Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*, Esay xxvi. 9. and S. Peter in the Text, *they that have suffered in the flesh, have ceased from sin.* Which calls me to my second Task;

2. To shew first, by what arts the flesh engages men into courses of sin, and by what methods it does work them up to the heights of it. That I may Secondly declare how sufferings blast those methods, and make all the arts of flesh either unpracticable or too weak.

1. That the carnal appetite should reach after, and give up it self to sensual delights is so far from strange, that it is its nature; 'tis the Law of the members, the very signature of flesh, and inclination imprinted into it, of which it can no more divest it self, than the heated Deer can restrain it self from thirsting and panting after water-brooks: But when Reason and Religion have set bounds to this appetite, for it to scorn these mounds; for that Law in the members to fight with and prevail against the Law in the mind, those original dictates born in it, and Christian Principles infused into it, this is the Fleshes aim and sin. Now this it does by exciting to ill actions, as being fauc'd with pleasures and contents, and by indisposing to good actions, as being troublesome or not at all delightful to the sense, and as for all other delights, it hath no apprehension

hension of, but indisposeth for them perfectly. So that this it does, it engages too much in Pleasures here, and it takes off all cares or thoughts of any joys hereafter; both these I will shew you, and thus it works;

1. It prevails with us to indulge our selves the full use of lawful pleasures, and for this the Flesh will urge, it is the end of their Creation; to do otherwise were to evacuate Gods purpose in the making; Did he give us good things not to enjoy them?

Thus every sort of sin insinuates it self at first: Youth will not deny it self converses with temptations, although he have reason to fear they will commit a rape upon his warmer passions, which are chased by such encounters. But God has not forbid him Conversation; and why should he be an *Anchoret* and recluse in the throngs of Cities and of Courts? Another that would not by any means be luxurious or intemperate, yet goes as near them as he can, and contrives to enjoy all those delights that do indeed but sauce Intemperance, and make Excess palatable: And truly why should he restrain himself from meats and drinks, and be a *Jew* again? All these believe they live righteously, soberly, and godly enough. This resolution works in every recreation, pleasure, honour, and advantage of this World, men are content to make as near approaches to the Sin as they can; and indeed believe they have no reason to be morose unto themselves: I will deny my self nothing that God hath not denied me, but enjoy as far as possibly and lawfully I may. But then, by doing thus it

Secondly, does oft take in somewhat of the immoderate and unlawful, which cannot be avoided, both because it is hard to set the exact bounds and limits of what is lawful: The *καρὸν*, the Line that meres out Vertue from its Neighbour Vice, is not so plain in every place as to chalk out exactly to this point thou mayst come, and no farther; hence the man sometimes mistakes himself into a fault; however the extremity of Lawful is, we know the confines and very edge of Vice. And then to him that plays upon the brink of sin, it is a very easie step into it, and indeed unavoidable, when a man is ruffled and hurried on, not only by his inward stings and inclinations, but by the practice of the World, which makes use of that holy Name of Friendship, to bring Vice into our acquaintance, and to befriend us into everlasting Death (of such Friends I can have legions in Hell; and the God of this World will serve me, upon this account, to procure for my Sin and my Destruction:) but howsoever when the Appetite is heated, they are not to be denied.

Thirdly, this happening therefore sometimes proves a Snare and bait still to go on, both as it takes away the horror and the averfation of the sins which at the first seem uncouth, till a man be experienced in them; and also as it smoothes the way, for such beginnings do nurse up a Habit and prepare a Custom, and make Vice very easie, which at first it is not, while the Appetite is modest and not able to digest full Doses, till use enlarge and stretch it.

And now the *Mind*, which by these means tastes diverse Pleasures, and the Degrees of them, and finds a gust in them, yet not being satisfied in any one (as 'tis impossible it should be) stirs up the Appetite to vary and proceed; that that contentment which single pleasures could not afford, diversified might make up. Wretched Nature using that as

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that we may be sure to hear this Voice, God does by it *open the ear*, Job xxxiii. 14, 15, 16. *God speaks once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not, in a dream and in a vision, then he opens the ears of men by Chastisements*, as it follows in four Verses full of them, 91, 20, 21, 22. *and sealeth his instruction that he may withdraw Man from his purpose, i. e. that he may make him cease from sin.* It seems the place of Dragons is Gods chiefest School of Repentance; and we may have a clearer sight of him in the *dimness of anguish*, than *Vision* it self does give. When men did not perceive that, saith Job, yet this open'd the Ear, and so God *sealeth the Instruction*: And truly when the Soul dissolves in Tears, and when, as David words it. *The heart in the midst of the body is even like melting wax*, then only 'tis susceptible of *Impression*, then is the time for *sealing the Instruction*. Nor does Chastisement open the Ear only, but the *Understanding* also; *I will give her trouble*, *δυνατώξαι συνένοιαν*, I will take her into the Wilderness *וארבר על-לב* saith he, and *speake unto her Heart*; There is convincing Experience of all this. Pharaoh that was an Atheist in Prosperity, does beg for Prayers in Adversity; before he suffers, Pharaoh says, *Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*, Exod. v. v. 2. but yet Thunder preaches obedience into him, and Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron and said, *I have sinned, the Lord is righteous, and I and my People are wicked, intreat the Lord that there be no more mighty Thundrings*, (no more Voices of God, the Hebrew words it) *and I will let you go*, Exod. ix. 27. And in the Book of Judges you will find that whole Age was nothing but a vicissitude of *sinning and suffering*, divided betwixt *Idolatry and Calamity*. When Gods hand was not on them they ran after other Gods, as if to be freed from Oppression had been to be set free from Gods Worship and Service; but when he did return to *slay them*, then they sought him, and they returned to enquire early after God, and they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God was their Redeemer. Psal. lxxviii. 34, 35. So that from such induction the Prophet might pronounce, that *when Gods Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*, Esay xxvi. 9. and S. Peter in the Text, *they that have suffered in the flesh, have ceased from sin.* Which calls me to my second Task;

2. To shew first, by what arts the flesh engages men into courses of sin, and by what methods it does work them up to the heights of it. That I may Secondly declare how sufferings blast those methods, and make all the arts of flesh either unpracticable or too weak.

1. That the carnal appetite should reach after, and give up it self to sensual delights is so far from strange, that it is its nature; 'tis the Law of the members, the very signature of flesh, and inclination imprinted into it, of which it can no more divest it self, than the heated Deer can restrain it self from *thirsting and panting after water-brooks*: But when Reason and Religion have set bounds to this appetite, for it to scorn these mounds; for that *Law in the members* to fight with and prevail against the *Law in the mind*, those original dictates born in it, and Christian Principles infused into it, this is the Fleshes aim and sin. Now this it does by exciting to ill actions, as being sauc'd with pleasures and contents, and by indisposing to good actions, as being troublesome or not at all delightful to the sense, and as for all other delights, it hath no apprehension

hension of, but indisposeth for them perfectly. So that this it does, it engages too much in Pleasures here, and it takes off all cares or thoughts of any joys hereafter; both these I will shew you, and thus it works;

1. It prevails with us to indulge our selves the full use of lawful pleasures, and for this the Flesh will urge, it is the end of their Creation; to do otherwise were to evacuate Gods purpose in the making; Did he give us good things not to enjoy them?

Thus every sort of sin insinuates it self at first: Youth will not deny it self converses with temptations, although he have reason to fear they will commit a rape upon his warmer passions, which are chased by such encounters. But God has not forbid him Conversation; and why should he be an *Anchoret* and recluse in the throngs of Cities and of Courts? Another that would not by any means be luxurious or intemperate, yet goes as near them as he can, and contrives to enjoy all those delights that do indeed but fauce Intemperance, and make Excess palatable: And truly why should he restrain himself from meats and drinks, and be a Jew again? All these believe they live righteously, soberly, and godly enough. This resolution works in every recreation, pleasure, honour, and advantage of this World, men are content to make as near approaches to the Sin as they can; and indeed believe they have no reason to be morose unto themselves: I will deny my self nothing that God hath not denied me, but enjoy as far as possibly and lawfully I may. But then, by doing thus it

Secondly, does oft take in somewhat of the immoderate and unlawful, which cannot be avoided, both because it is hard to set the exact bounds and limits of what is lawful: The *παράν*, the Line that meres out Vertue from its Neighbour Vice, is not so plain in every place as to chalk out exactly to this point thou mayst come, and no farther; hence the man sometimes mistakes himself into a fault; however the extremity of Lawful is, we know the confines and very edge of Vice. And then to him that plays upon the brink of sin, it is a very easie step into it, and indeed unavoidable, when a man is rusht and hurried on, not only by his inward stings and inclinations, but by the practice of the World, which makes use of that holy Name of Friendship, to bring Vice into our acquaintance, and to befriend us into everlasting Death (of such Friends I can have legions in Hell; and the God of this World will serve me, upon this account, to procure for my Sin and my Destruction:) but howsoever when the Appetite is heated, they are not to be denied.

Thirdly, this happening therefore sometimes proves a Snare and bait still to go on, both as it takes away the horror and the averfation of the sins which at the first seem uncouth, till a man be experienced in them; and also as it smooths the way, for such beginnings do nurse up a Habit and prepare a Custom, and make Vice very easie, which at first it is not, while the Appetite is modest and not able to digest full Doses, till use enlarge and stretch it.

And now the *Mind*, which by these means tastes diverse Pleasures, and the Degrees of them, and finds a gust in them, yet not being satisfied in any one (as 'tis impossible it should be) stirs up the Appetite to vary and proceed; that that contentment which single pleasures could not afford, diversified might make up. Wretched Nature using that as

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an Attractive, which should repell; for who would hugg a Cloud? embrace that which does not, cannot satisfie? but only Flesh which for that very reason, hunts on and follows the scent. And by doing so a while, it brings upon it self,

Fourthly, Something like a necessity of doing so: Thus Continnence would be some mens Disease, and the Intemperate cannot live without his Vice, but gapes as much as Thirst and Fever do, and if he have not satisfaction, suffers as many qualms and pangs as his Riot used to cause in the Apprentifage of his sin; so that there is a kind of necessity of the practice, and he wisely seeming to make a vertue of necessity, begins to think them the only happinels, at least of this life, freely without reluctancy embracing them.

And now the Flesh is *Callous*, and if you doubt how it could so harden it self, as not to be pervious to any stings of Conscience, but Proof against all Pricks, though Experiment may persuade you; yet I will shew you the Method.

As all Appetite you know is blind, so the Guides also of Carnal appetite; The senses are very short-sighted, they cannot look forward to the next Life, to the hopes of Heaven, or the pains of Hell, to bring them into the ballance with the present pleasure, and see which does overweigh. The Flesh only lives *extempore*, looks but upon that which is before it, scarce on that. We have sufficient experience of this, for when one Vice will not look forwards a year or two to the penury and rottenness some courses do pull down: And when another Vice, as if it had learnt to fulfill our Saviours command, and *take no care for the morrow*, will not think of the next mornings pains and Headach; Nay, when the ambitious Usurper will not look just before him, to see where he does place his steps, on Precipices and Sword-points, to note how the Pyramids he does climb are made slippery with blood; Pyramids, did I say? pointed Reeds rather, things that have not strength to bear, but only sharpness to stab; and where the mans own weight makes his Up-holders fail and wound him both together, at once sink under him and pierce him thorough. Nay, we see many whose sins inflict themselves, who may be truly said to *bear their Iniquities*, yet chuse those sins that bring their Plagues along with them; for we see men with most excessive difficulty practise a Vice only that they may have the Vice, swallow sickness, drink Convulsions and dead Paralyfes, foaming Epilepsies, only that all this may be easie to them. And this is but one instance of the many that might be made; just as the King of *Pontus*, that ate Poison that so he might be used to it: Strange! that a man should torture himself with all those deadly symptoms that Poison racks the body with, only that he might eat Poison; yet just such is the Sinners Design, and all the ease and pleasure he acquires at last in sinning, is but familiarity of Poison, custom of Danger, and acquaintance of Ruine. Good God! that men should train and exercise themselves so for perdition! that they should go through a discipline of torments to get an Habit of destroying themselves! that they should work out their own condemnation with hardships and agonies! that as if 'twere too easie to go down the hill to Hell, the descent shall be made craggy, and they force breaches into it, and great headlong Precipices to make the way more painful, and more dangerous, to make the fall more wounding and more irrecoverable!

coverable! And what shall give a check where difficulty does provoke, and torments do ingratiate.

Well: But though Flesh be so short-sighted and inconsiderate, the mind might trash it by suggesting other sorts of punishments that do await transgression. Why truly it rude and unmannerly Conscience do sometimes thrust in the thoughts of Hell, the Flesh, which I told you, is not terrified with any thing but what it feels (now Conscience presents Hell as a thing of hereafter, not till Death be past) it satisfies Conscience with a Repentance of Hereafter, *before Death come I will be sorry for my sins, and God is merciful.* Conscience being thus quieted, and both Reins and Spur given to the Flesh, it takes its full Carier, and leaves behind all thoughts of Repentance, and indeed, of God, or Heaven; the hope and joys of which, are the only possible method that is left to take off the Man from his eager pursuit, or to divert him in his course. But as to that also, that I may shew you the next heat.

The *Mind* that is immerst in body, and hath been long accustomed to tast no pleasure but the carnal ones, its fancy fill'd with those *Ideas*, it does imbibe such a tincture of sensuality, receives such an infusion of Flesh, and so impregnated with the fumes of Carnality, which clog the Spirit, that its complexion and temper is quite altered, it is diluted and deprest, and so grown stupid and unactive to all higher things. Heaven and all after-things, it may be, are the prejudice of such persons, not their persuasions; some thin conceptions of such things have been thrown into them, but never were improved; for their Mind hath otherwise been employed, and they can have no appetite to them, because they have never had any tast or relish of any thing but sensual. And indeed that both longings after, and thoughts of a better Life should be altogether dead in the carnal man, is but a natural and necessary effect of the verge of his Delights. For what motive is there in Heaven to stir up his appetite, to whom Heaven it self would not be a place of Joy? For I am verily persuaded, were the Carnal man in those Eternal Mansions compassed with streams of Glory, it were impossible for him to take delight in them, and he would grope for Paradise in the midst of Heaven: As much impossible as for the most unlearned Idiot to satisfy himself with the pleasures of a Mathematical demonstration: Let him have the *Hecatombé*, and let *Pythagoras* be an Epicure on the *dimensions of a Triangle*, the other hath no palate for these pleasures; and indeed how could the unclean lascivious please himself in the enjoyment of those Felicities that have no Sex, *Where they neither Marry, nor are given in Marriage?* Or how the Riotous, that Eats to eat, eats to hunger and provoke, not satisfy; how will he content himself there where their happiness is, *they shall neither hunger nor thirst*, or the Incendiaries that love to set all on fire, what should they do there where there are no flames but such as kindle *Seraphins*; so that *flesh and blood*, not only *shall not*, but *cannot enjoy the Kingdom of God*: And why then should they long after, or think of it? Nay, I would this unhappy Age, and an unlucky *axiome* of *Aristotles* did not convince that they do think there are no such things; *Sensual pleasures, are corruptive of Principles*, saith he; and indeed where Damnation is the conclusion, 'tis a much quieter and more easie thing for Men of Wit and Understanding to deny the Principles, than granting them, to lie under the torture of being

Matth. xxii. 30.

Rev. vii. 16.

Psalms i. 1.

ing liable to such an inference; they therefore that resolve to love this Life and all the sinful pleasures of it, at the next step resolve there is no other Life. And now this pamper'd and puffed Flesh is got into the *Psalms* Chair, the Chair of Scorners; and 'tis one of the Luxuries of their life to scoff at them who are so foolish as to be Religious, and to deny their flesh its present appetites and pleasures on such thin after-hopes; here their Wit also is an *Epicure*, and feasts and triumphs, dictates, and professes in that Chair; ἐν καθέδρᾳ λοιμῶν, in the Chair of Pestilences, as the *LXX* translate, and very truly, for such men shed a Sphere of Contagion about them, and their Discourses are *effluvia* of the Plague, and the breath of Pestilence. But how to get Flesh down out of this Chair, that's the difficulty; yet that my Text will tell us, for all this progress of the Flesh is trahit and checkt by Sufferings, for, *He that hath suffered hath ceased from Sin.* Which how, I will briefly shew.

The Fleashes first Art was by immersing it self in the full Lawful use of Pleasures, and by consequence, in the immoderate; to prevail with the Soul to find a gust in them, and from a continued enjoyment to conclude them necessary; and so from the importunities of a perpetual temper and an accustomed satisfaction to think of nothing else in this life. Now it is plain Affliction made this Art unpracticable, for that it did do so, was every ones complaint; it rob'd them of the immoderate, and even of the lawful use of Pleasures, it took off those customary Delights by which the mind was habituated and glued to them, by not allowing them; and made them so far from being necessary, that they were not acquirable. Thus by denying us even the Lawful use of them, it stabs the Flesh in its first onset: Indeed it does that for us which every man in every state of life in his most plentiful prosperity must sometimes do for himself; that is, Deny himself what he desires, and might enjoy without offence: Which he that does not do, but constantly gives his Appetite every sort and degree of lawful thing it asks, does teach it to crave on, and be importunate, and insolent, and not endure to be resisted, when it did always find him to be so obsequious to it. If *David* never checkt *Adonijah*, did not at any time displease him, saying, *Why hast thou done so?* he easily takes confidence to say *I will be King*, and step into the Throne. 1 *Kings* i. 5, 6. But he that mortifies sometimes, that does acquaint even his most innocent desires with a denial, how can unlawful ones assault him? For can my Appetite hope to betray me into superfluities, who have taught my self not to wish for necessities? Will he be tempted with Excesses, or hearken to the invitations of Luxury, that will not hear his bowels when they croak for bread? Or he gape for intemperate satisfactions, who will not let thirst call, but shuts his mouth against it? Why should he covet more that hath learnt to give away, and want that which he hath? Now Sufferings inflict this temper on us, and acquaint us with the necessity of all this, and in a while with the liking of it, teach us Content without Lawful Delights? yea, by degrees make that content appear better than an assured enjoyment: For were I offered the choice either of an *uninterrupted Health*, or of a *certain Cure* in all Diseases, sure I had rather *never need a Potion* than drink *Antidote* and *Health* it self. And even so the lawful good things of this Life are at the best but *Remedies* and *Reliefs*, never good but upon supposition: Therefore while

while Affliction taught us to want, it hath destroyed this Art of the Flesh.

As for the Second, Then the lulling asleep all sense or thoughts of any Life hereafter, neither minding the fear of one, or hopes of the other; Affliction surely met with this too: For Sufferings bring both the *hereafters* to remembrance, the Sad one, while every Punishment was an Essay and tast of that which is prepared for those that live after the Flesh, and the more insupportable our *Fiery Tryal* was, the more it caution'd us to beware of *that Fire which is never quenched.* And for the other Life, surely when our Condition was such, that if we lookt unto the Earth, behold nothing but *Darkness and dimness of Anguish, and darkness as of the shadow of Death*, we could not choose but turn away our Eyes and lift them up to Heaven. When the Soul is thrown down by Oppression, it mounts by a resiliency, and with the force of pressure is crush'd Upwards; or if the Load be heavy, so as to make it grovel and lie prostrate, it is but prest into the posture of Devotion: When she's disseised of all, turn'd out of every possession, then she begins to think of an *abiding City, and eternal Mansions.* For the Soul that is restless, when it sees nothing here below to stay upon, but all is hurried from her, roams about for some hold to rest on, and being able in that case to find nothing but God, there she does grasp and cling; and when the storms splits all enjoyments, and devours Friends which make enjoyments comfortable, all perish in one wrack, then she sees she must catch at him that sits above the Water-Floods. I told you out of *Job*, Affliction did discover better than Revelation, and in the dimness of Anguish we might see more than by Vision; and truly of two Visions which our Saviour gave to his most intimate Apostles *Peter, James, and John*, the one of Glory on Mount *Tabor*, the other of Sufferings in *Gethsemane*; shewing in the one *Heaven and Himself transfigured*, a glimpse of beatifical Vision; and in the other *Hell transfigured*, and a sad Scene of all its Agonies, he thought this a more concerning sight, for when they fell asleep at both, at his Transfiguration, *Luke ix. 32. Peter, and they that were with him, were heavy with sleep*; yet he does not rouse them up to behold his Glory; when they did awake, indeed they saw a glimpse of it, but *straight a Cloud did overshadow it, verse 34.* But at his Passion he bids them *Watch with him, Matth. xxviii. 38.* and when he findeth them asleep, he says, *What, could ye not watch with me one hour? ver. 40.* and bids them watch again, *ver. 41.* and comes again a *third time* and upbraids their drowsiness, *ver. 45.* So much more necessary was it to behold his *Agonies*, than to see his *Felicities*: Glory does not discover or invite to Heaven, so much as Sufferings drive to it; and we are more concerned to take a view of that *Garden in Gethsemane*, than that of *Paradise*, and the going down from the *Mount of Olives* does more advantage us in climbing the *Eternal hill*, than all *Mount Tabor's* height. Nor do Afflictions only drive us toward Heaven, but they beget an hope of it. *Knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience, Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, Rom. v. 3. 4.* And *I will give them the Valley of Achor for a door of Hope, Hos. ii. 14.* As if Despair oppress them into Hope, and that low troublous Valley opened into the highest Firmament. Now he that rides at *Anchor of this Hope*, though his Anchor lie buried under Waves, yet

Rom. iv. 18.

those rousing Hills of Sea, swell'd by storms of Affliction, and raised too by his Tears, do without *Hyperbole* mount him to Heaven: He that hath entertained these Expectations in earnest, how will he slight Temptations here below? What will he not sacrifice to *Christs* Command? See, *Abraham* that did but hope for *Canaan*, and that far off too, to be possess'd by the Posterity of his Son *Isaac*, yet when God commands him to slay *Isaac* before he had any posterity, and so to dash all his own Promises, and quite cut off the very motive to *Abrahams* Obedience, yet he hopes and obeys even to contradiction, *Does both against hope*. And had we but the shadow of his hope, as he had but the shadow of our Promises, how would we sacrifice a sin at his Command, and think a *Fleshly* lust a good exchange for the hope of Heaven, which Tribulation worketh? and *he that had suffered in the Flesh, would certainly cease from sin*.

And now my last work is to view our own Concern in this, and surely that must be all Exultation and Triumph, and this not so much that our *sufferings* are ceased, as that our *sins* are so; not that our Enemies are sunk, but that our flesh is vanquish'd, that *sub hoc signo vinces* is thus also come to pass, with the Standard of the Cross, that Cross on which our selves were Crucified, we have overcome; and with this Christian Banner we have put to flight the Armies of our Heathen Vices. For thus it must be, if my Text be true; and sure it is not possible it should be otherwise: For look upon the Muster-roll of these our Foes which *S. Paul* does produce, *Gal. v. v. 19, 20, 21.* and see which of them could escape; it runs thus, *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murder, Drunkenness, Revellings.*

To begin with the great Commanders, those that lead the Van and bring up the Rear, *Uncleanness*, and *Revellings*; They that consider how they not only suffered for, but by these Vices, which did misplace mens watches and attendances; sins that were not only like *Achans* in our Army, and ruin'd it by bringing the accursed thing into it, but were like *Hannibal's Numidians* in the *Roman* Army, that did at once betray to, and inflict Ruin; sins that did merit and effect Destruction, and made as well as provok'd, overthrows; and sins that by Gods goodness did cut off themselves, while they did bring men into a condition that would not bear such Vices. These are the guilts of Wealth and Splendor, that do attend Felicity and Pomp; it is not only hopeful that men did resolve to be reveng'd on these great workers of their mischief, and will no more reset such Traitors in their bosoms; But sure these sins are ceased that did put out themselves.

Then for *Seditions*; They who consider when they broke the *Scepter*, they left us nothing but the *Rod of God* instead of it; a Rod that turned straight into a *Serpent*, that changed our *Seas* into *Blood*, or rather made *new Seas* of our own blood; that brought *Locusts* over the Earth, and *Frogs* into the *Temple* also, to croak there; that struck *Lights* here worse than *Egyptian* Darknes, and destroyed all the first born of the Nation, all the Nobles of the Land; these will easily believe that we have felt this Rod too much to seize upon it hastily again; the *Scepter* is restored, and this *Rod* like to that in *Israel*, laid up, I hope, within the *Ark* together with the *Tables of the Law*, never to be disjoyn'd from Gods Commands, nor taken thence against them.

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Next for *Heresies*; Truly we have left us none to revive, or to make new; the mischief both of them and their Cause, the want of Government in the Church is now discerned and remedied: And for *Divisions* and *Schisms*, they who reflect on the said issues of them, how well meaning soever all their Causes were, will certainly avoid them: To see how while we quarrelled for the Fringes of Religion, we tore the seamless Coat of Christ to pieces; yea, and the body too: How when we first disliked a Liturgy, the daily Sacrifice of Prayer was made to cease, and then the House of Prayer was demolisht; next, *Christs*, our *Lords Prayer* was rejected, that Liturgy of his own framing, thrown away in the Rubbish of his Temple, and then it was a sin to pray at all. His Table we must have remov'd, and then his *Supper* was so too; and that great Mystery of our Religion, the *Sacrament* of our Redemption, was buried in the Ruins of his Altar. To see how thus out of heats of Religion we destroyed all Religion, because that some adjacent Circumstances did not please us, and fetcht a Coal from the Altar to set fire to and burn down the Temple, because the building of some out-Court was, we thought, irregular; is Document enough not to attempt this any more for Religions sake: For now it would be in despite of Christ, who hath almost verified the *Jewish* accusation of him, *Destroy this Temple also, and in three days he will build it up again*; and hath built it up we hope, as he did that of his own Body, never to fall again by us: Surely we will not kill this Body of his out of Love to him, and make his *Temple* his *burnt Offering*. When God hath set our sins in order thus before our eyes, shewed them us in their sad effects, there is no fear that we should fall in love with them.

But where it is not thus, where Gods last and most working Method hath been able to produce no good, I must, to keep my word,

Apply the Danger: In that case what remains but the *Curse of the ground*, *Heb. vi. 8.* which, if after all the Husbandmans methods of Care and Art, it brings forth only *thorns* and *briars*, it is *rejected* by him, he will bestow no more labour on it, but can hardly forbear cursing such an ill piece of ground, and *its end is to be burnt*: So we after Gods Husbandry of Afflictions, when the *Plowers plowed upon our backs* and *made long furrows*, and the Iron teeth of Oppressors as it were harrowed us; if we bring forth only the fruits of the Flesh, we are rejected, reprobated, God will bestow no more Arts on us, we are not far from his curse, and there *remains only a fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation*. If any did continue refractory to the Rod, sinn'd under and against Judgment, and did commit with an high hand even while the Lords hand was stretch'd out against them, what shall reform, what can express their guilt? To have beheld that tragical iniquity we read of *Lyons*, where when the City was so visited with the Pestilence that scarce any were free, that the Dead without a figure buried their dead, falling down one upon another, each being at once a Carcass and a grave; the Soldiers of the Cittadel would daily issue forth and devour Virgins now giving up the ghost, defile Matrons even already dead, committing with the dust, warming the grave with sinful heats, and coupling with the Plague and Death; would not this have seemed the Landskip of Hell to us, when they suffer and sin together? Yet when a Church and State were on their death-beds, Gods Tokens

Psalm. Cxxix. 3;

on them, visited with the treasures of his Plagues, and our selves sinking in that our Ruin, if any went a whoring after their own flesh, still fulfilling the lusts thereof, and in the midst of Deaths searching for sins; what was this but to do the same things whose story does affright us, while the actions please? and in this case what method will be useful? do we think our selves of that generous kind that will do nothing by compulsion, but will for kindness; and though we would not be chained, yet we will be drawn to Vertue by the cords of Love; and now God hath shewn mercy on us, we will return him service out of gratitude. Truly, I make no question but most of us have promised some such things to God, how if he would but *save us from our Enemies* that we might *serve him without fear*, that we would do it *in holiness and Righteousness before him*: And if he would restore his opportunities of Worship, how we would use them. Thus we did labour to tempt God, and draw him in to have compassion; and this was

Jer. xxxi. 18. *Ephraims Imagination just, I heard Ephraim bemoaning himself, saith the Prophet, as a Bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, turn thou me and I shall be turned; turn my Captivity, and I will turn my life: But this was as a Bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, that did not like the straitness and pressure of it, and would promise any thing to get it off, thought it more easie to reform than bear Affliction: But is this hopeful think you? The Soldiers of Lyons that would ravish Death, and break into the Grave for Lust, it may be would have been modest, and retired from the fair Palaces that are prepared to tempt and entertain that Vice: Cold and insensible of all those heats that Health and Beauty kindle; but remember it was the taking off Gods hand that hardened Pharaohs heart, and a release from punishment was his Reprobation.*

And as for those that were humbled under the Rod, and when God had retrench'd from their enjoyments, did put restraints upon themselves, gave over sinning. I have a word of Caution for them, that they examine well and take a care it be a ceasing from sin, like that in the Text, a *dying* to it, that *they no longer live the rest of their time in the flesh to the lusts of men*: For if this Old Man be only cold and stiff, not mortified; by the calm and sunshine of Peace, likely to be warm'd into a recovery; if thou owe all thy Innocence to thy Pressure, wert only plunder'd of thy sins, and thy Vertue and Poverty hand in hand as they were born, so they will die together, thy Vices and Revenues come in at once: What is this but to invite new Desolations, which God in kindness must send to take away the opportunities and foment of our ruining sins? 'Tis true, when God has wrought such most astonishing miracles of mercy for us, when he did make Calamity contribute to our Happiness; when we were Shipwrackt to the Haven and the Shore; when Ruins did advance us and we fell upwards; it is an hopeful argument God would not do such mighty works on purpose to undo them, we have good ground of confidence that he will preserve his own mercies, and will not throw away the issues of his goodness in which his bounty hath so great an interest and share. But yet if we debauch Salvation, and make it serve our undoing, if we order these opportunities of mercy so, that they only help us to fill up the measure of our sins, if we teach Gods long-suffering only to work out our eternal

nal sufferings, these Mercies will prove very cruel to us, and far from giving any colour for our hopes. When the Prodigal was received into his Fathers house and arms, had a *Ring* put on him, and the *fatted Calf* Luke xv. killed for him, if he should strait have invited the companions of his former Riot to that *fatted Calf*, and joyn'd his *Harlot* to him with that *Ring*, he had deserved then to be disinherited both from his Fathers house and pittie, who would have had no farther entertainment, nor no bowels for him. To prevent such a fate, let us make no relapses, but quite cease from sin; which if we do not, a little Logick will draw an unhappy inference from this Text; if *he that hath suffered hath ceased from sin*, then *he that hath not ceased from sinning hath not suffered*, and then what is all this that we have felt and so lain under? What is it if it be not *suffering*? If this be but preparative, then what is the full Potion, the Cup of Indignation, when all his Vials shall be poured into it? If such have been the beginnings of sufferings, what shall the issues be? If the morning dew of the day of punishment have been so full of blood, what shall the Storm and Tempest be? the deluge and inundation of Fury? Take heed of making God relapse, 'tis in your power to prevent it, your Reformation will be his preservative and Antidote. That is the way to keep all whole; to settle Government and Religion both; at once to establish the *Kings Throne and Christs*: For notwithstanding mens pretensions, these Thrones are not at all inconsistent: For that there must be *no King but Christ*, that there cannot be a Kingdom here of this World, because there is a Kingdom that is not of this World is such another Argument, as that there cannot be an Earth because there is an Heaven. Indeed if we fulfill my Text, then we shall reconcile these Kingdoms, and bring down Heaven into us; for that's a state where there is neither sin, nor suffering, where there shall be no tears because no guilt to merit them, and no calamity to make them. Now Reformation does work this here in some degree, and afterwards our comforts that are checker'd with some sufferings, and our Piety which is soiled with spots, shall change into Immortal and unsullied Glories, he prepare us all *Who wash't us from our sins in his own Blood, and by his sufferings hath made us Kings and Priests to God and his Father, to whom be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever, Amen.*

The Second .

SERMON,

Preached at

WHITE-HALL.

October 20. 1661.

P S A L M LXXIII. 1.

*Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are
of a Clean Heart.*

WAS a false Confidence the Jews did nourish, That they should dwell securely in their Land, notwithstanding their provocations, because the Worship and the House of God was in it; They did but *trust on lying words*, the Prophet says, when they Jer. vii. 4. did trust upon *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*; As if the Temple were a Sanctuary for those that did profane it, and the *horns of the Altar* would secure them, when 'twas *the blood upon the Altar* call'd for Vengeance. Nor was that after-plea of theirs valid, We are the chosen *Israel*, of God, *We have Abraham to our Father*; As if when by their John viii. 39. works they had adopted to themselves another Parent, were *of their* Verse 44. *Father the Devil*, they could claim any but their present Fathers interest, or have the blessings of forsaken *Abraham*. Now if it be no other-wise with us, but because in *our Judah God is known, his Name great in* Psal. lxxvi. 1, 2. *our Israel, with us in Salem*, that is, in peace, *he hath his Tabernacle now, and his dwelling in Sion*: And so much knowledg, such pretences to the Name of God, and to his Worship, are not with other Nations, nor have they such advantages to know his Law: If as each party of us does assume these Priviledges to it self, so each do also rest in them, although their Lives answer not these advantages. If while they judg themselves Christs chosen Flock, boast Covenants and Alliances with God, although they violate all those Relations, they yet trust those will secure them: For why? the being of such a Party and Persuasion

Numb. xxiii.
21.

is the signature and Amulet that will preserve them in Gods favour, the charm through which *he will not see Iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel.* Lastly, If we that were the distinctive Character of *Israel*, that of a *Ransom'd, Purchas'd People* (for sure our Rescues rise unto the number and the rate of those which brought the *Sons of Jacob* from the *House of Bondage*) if we, as they, presume and surfeit upon goodness, and think *these gifts of God too are without Repentance*, believe our being his Redeemed, his Church; conceit our Orthodox Profession (as once we thought our righteous Cause should do) will shield us from the danger of our *Enemies*, and of our *Vices* too, and neither let our *Foes* nor our *selves* ruin us; with such my Text and my intentions prepare to meet, lest we should fill the Parallel; and as we equal *Israel* in our Deliverances, and imitate their practices, we do transcribe the fatal Pattern too in the most full resemblance, and repletion of an entire *exclusion*; for although God be truly loving to his Church, yet the *ungodly* does his soul abhor; however in a signal manner he be good to *Israel*, yet this his kindness does confine it self to such as are of a clean heart.

The words need not much explication; By *Israel* is meant the Church of God, and by his *goodness* to it, all his external mercies also and protections, as the Psalm evinces; and by *such as are of a clean heart*, those that to the profession of Religion and Holiness of outward conversation, do add internal purity and sincerity; for some translate it, *such as are of a clean heart*, some, *such as are true-hearted and sincere*: And it signifies both.

Rom. ix. 6.

The words thus explicated give me these Subjects of Discourse. First, a general Proposition, *Truly God is good to Israel*, to his Church. Secondly, an assignation of Conditions under which that general Proposition holds, *All are not Israel that are of Israel*, it holds only in such as are of a clean heart. And in this we have, first, a quality appropriate to the Church, *Cleanness*. Secondly, with its subject, *the Heart*; and there I shall enquire why that alone is mention'd, whether the cleanness of the Heart suffice, and having answered that, shall proceed. Thirdly, to consider them together, in both the given senses as they mean, a *sincere heart*, and a *pure undefiled heart*: In each of which Considerations, because the latter part of my Text is a limitation of the former, shewing where that general Proposition is of force, where it is not; I shall as I proceed, view all the several guilts opposed to either notion of *Cleanness*, and see how far each of them does remove from any interest in the Lords goodness to his Church, which is the natural Application of each part, and shall be mine.

1. *Truly God is good to Israel*, his Church. And sure this Proposition is evident to us by its own light, to whom God proved his goodness to astonishment, by exercising it to Miracle; while he at once wrought Prodigies of kindness and Conviction; to which we have only this proof to add, That God hath been so plentiful in Bounties, that we are weary of every mention of them, and have so surfeited on Goodness that we do nauseate the acknowledgment. So that his kindness in sustaining his Compassions does vie with that which did effect them, who as he will not be provok'd not to be good by such prodigious unthankfulness, so neither will he by the most exasperating use of his Favours: God did complain

complain of *Israel*, *Thou hast taken thy fair Jewels of my Gold and my Silver which I had given thee, and madest to thy self Images: My meat also which I gave thee, my fine Flour, mine Oyl, and Honey wherewith I fed thee, and hast even set it before them for a sweet savour.* And if men now do offer things, in which God hath the same propriety, to baser Idols, to their Vices; if they do sauce his meat, which he hath given them, to sacrifice to Luxury, take his silver and gold to serve in the Idolatry of Covetousness, and use his Jewels to dress Images also for foulest adorations. If Atheism grow against Miracle and Goodness too, and men do most deny God now when he hath given greatest evidences of his kind Providence; I know not by what argument encouraged, unless his in the Poet,

Ezek. xvi. 17, 19.

— *Factum quod se dum negat hoc videt beatum,*

because they see they fare best now, though they deny him most; teaching his *goodness* to confute his *being*. If they do look upon the wondrous restitution of Gods Service as but a shifting of the Scene of Worship, only another and more gaudy draught and Landskip of Religion shot on the Stage, and do accordingly esteem it as a variety and entertainment for their senses only; for nothing higher is engag'd, I doubt me, in those Offices: If they assist in them not out of Principle, but meer indifference to all, and therefore these at present; It is not *balting betwixt God and Baal this*, it is the bowing of the knee to both, which they can do to each alike, when either is the uppermost, and truly count them Deities alike, I fear. Nay, when the only Ordinance, the *Sermon*, is but a prize within the Temple, the Preacher but *Rhetor dicturus ad aram*, that comes to do his Exercise before the Altar, in which men are concern'd no farther than to hear and judge, not to be sentenc'd by: If God endure all this, and do continue still his Church, his Worship, and his other Mercies, then I may well conclude that *Truly God is good to Israel*.

But I will not be this fastidious Remembrancer: These arguments may prove his goodness, but sure these qualities will not preserve it to us; the *limitation*, my next part, must suggest them; which tells us who they are God is good to: *Even to such as are of a clean Heart*.

1. *Clean*. Clean, Pure, and Holy, are so essential Attributes of the *Israel* or Church of God, that though I must not say the Church does take in none but such; For there are *Tares*, unwholsom *Poppy* too, and *Darnel* with the *Wheat*, yet I must say that *Εκκλησία*, the Church is but a Congregation of such as are called to be *Saints*, 1 Cor. i. 2.

Mat. xvi. 28, 29, 30.

In the first *Israel* almost the whole Discipline of their Religion was purity in type, and all the Ceremonies of their Worship were but figures, rather *Doctrines of Cleanness*, when they came first to enter Covenant with God at *Horeb*, and to receive their Law, they were to *sanctify themselves and wash their cloaths*. What purity do those Commandments require, which they must not hear with any thing that was unclean about them? which they must wash all to receive? and indeed nothing with them was enterprized without it; they were to cleanse themselves from the impurities of meer Contingency; yea, they were bound to wash their Dreams and purifie their very sleeps; and all this is expound-

Exod. xix. 10.

ed by the Prophet *Isaiah*, i. 16, 17. *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil, learn to do well.*

Tit. iii. 5.

John iii. 3, 5.

And in our *Israel* by our Covenant there is as much of this required, for we were all initiated into our profession by Washing, regenerated in a Laver, and born again of Water, becoming so *Tertullians Sanctitatis designati*, set aside for Holiness, consecrated to cleanness, and made the votaries of purity. How clean a thing then must a Christian be who must be wash'd into the Name? nor is he thus wash'd only in the Font, there was a more inestimable fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, *Apoc. xi. 5. Jesus Christ hath wash'd us in his own blood; And Heb. ix. 14. The blood of Christ did purge our Consciences from dead works to serve the living God:* How great is our necessity of being clean, when to provide a means to make us so, God opens his Sons side, and our Laver is drawn out of the Heart of Christ: yet we have more effusions to contribute to it, *1 Cor. vi. 11. But ye are wash'd, but ye are sanctified by the Spirit of our God*, and we must be Baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. A Laver of flame also, to wash away our Scurf as well as fullages, and beyond all these, some of us have been purg'd too with the fiery trial, and molten in the furnace of Affliction, to separate our dross and purifie us from alloy, that we may be clean and refined too; may become Christians of the highest Carrect.

Math. iii. 11.

Such, among others, are the Obligations, such the Instruments of cleanness in a Christian: Let us inquire next into the importance of the quality, and the degree that is exacted.

And here I need not say that it stands in direct opposition to the licentious practices of Vice; this Scripture calls *corruption and pollution*, *2 Pet. ii. 19, 20.* and the Sinner is there stiled *the servant of corruption*; sure a worthy relation this, a Servant is we know, meaner than whom he serves, at least he is in that consideration as he serves; and then I pray you, in what rank of things is he or she who is below and baser than Corruption? *David* does also call such *open Sepulchres*; things all whose horreur does not lie in this, that they enclose rottenness and putrefaction, but open Sepulchres are gaping frightful noisomeness; and they do also shed a killing stench. A man that is engaged in conversations with impure sinners, is in a like condition with him who hath no air to draw into him, but that of Funeral Vaults, and does suck in only the breath of Pestilence.

But it is a small thing to say the cleanness of a Christian does abhor such licentious impurities; for it is such that though it may consist with those little stains that come by slips and failings of infirmity (these are the *spots of Children*) and also with some single fouler acts, into which the man may be surprized, provided they be suddenly wash'd off in tears: Yet can it not consist with continuance in a known sin, though it be but a breach of a single Commandment: And though the man be strict in other things, yet if he do allow himself one Vice, he is of the number of the *unclean*; for partial obedience does imply also partial disobedience, and to the worst and foulest mixture; therefore no purity. *Herod feared John the Baptist, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him, and when he heard him he did many things, and heard him gladly, Mark vi. 20.* Could you but pardon him one Crime, he were a most Religious person, but that indulg'd

dul'd makes him the *wicked Herod*: The matter of *Uriah* threw dirt, perpetual sticking dirt, into the Character of *David*, that man after *Gods heart*. There are few persons but some sin or other finds a particular engagement on, and does insinuate especially above all others into them; the *vice of Constitution*, the Crime of my Bosom, 'tis my *own flesh and blood*, I cannot tear that from me: Or else another sin does get into my *Coffers*, the profits of it *bribe* me to make much on't, and it brings such a reward with it I cannot be unkind to it; Or else the custom of a Vice hath made it my *acquaintance* and my *friend*, and then it is so joynted into me that there is no divulsion of it. Now when a Vice hath got any of these relations to me, rather than use a violence upon my self, I must find out some salve now to quiet Conscience, and yet keep the Vice. And truly if it be but one thing that a man transgresses in, he is apt to be gentle to himself, and finds plump grounds to be so. The best man hath his fault, and this is his, only in *this* the Good Lord pardon him; in other things he will be strict, but this is his particular infirmity, to which his very making did dispose him, having been poysoned by its Principles without his fault or conspiracy.

'Tis true, indeed, men have some one or other sinful inclination, which is a weight and violence upon them, and which they did derive from *Adam*, whose sin like an infection taken in by divers men, breaks out in several Diseases, according to variety of Constitutions: But truly *Adam* gave them no *ill Customs*, and they have no *Original habits*, themselves did educate their inclinations into *Vices*: and for those inclinations that are derived into them, the water of their Baptism was therefore poured upon them to cool those inbred heats, and quench those flashings out of Nature, wash away those foul innate tendencies in that Laver of Regeneration; which therefore they who spare and are tender to, because they are original and natural, they spare them for that very reason, for which they there engaged to ruin them, and do renounce their Baptism, as to the aims and uses of it. There thou didst list thy self a Soldier to fight against the *Devil, World, and Flesh*; now whichsoere of these gets most into thee, wilt thou think fit to spare thy Enemy, because he is thy bosom one? the Risque is greatest when the Foe is Rebel and Traytor too, is got in thy own Quarters, shuffled with thy own Forces, entred thy Holds and thy Defences, and mixes in thy Counsels, does counterfeit thy Guard, so that thou but command'st, and leadst on thy own ruin. Sure here is need of strictest care to rid thy self of so much treacherous danger; so far is it from a defence to say, this is the single force and bent of Nature in me, that if I no not therefore most resist it, I am perjuriously confederate with my Destruction; and howsoever pure I keep my self from other Vices, I am not clean. *David* will tell me when I am, *Psalms* xviii. 23. *I was uncorrupt before him, and eschewed my own wickedness*. God hath not given us Authority to pick and choose our duties; observe him where we like, and leave the rest; and when in the severe contritions of Repentance we come to judg our Lives, we have no leave to spare a Vice because custom hath made it our Companion and Intimate, or 'tis as near to us as the close inclinations of our hearts. He that does so, although he live a careful life in other things, yet all his Innocence

James ii. 10.

is only this, he hath a mind to but one sin; and those he does not care for he forbears, but that which pleaseth him, that he commits. And sure God is beholden to him that there is but one way of provoking which does take him, and therefore must allow him what he hath an inclination to, and pardon him because he does abstain from those he does not like. I shall now only add that in this case S. James's Aphorism holds, that *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point only, he is guilty of all*; he that allows himself to break one Precept, does keep none, but shall be reckoned guilty of those things which he does not commit. *For whosoever keepeth the whole Law, and yet thus offendeth in one point, is guilty of all.*

And then I need not prove such have no Title to the *goodness* of the Text, but may conclude, if God be good to *Israel*, it is to *such as are of a Clean Heart*; And so I fall upon the subject, *Heart*.

And here I must first caution not to think the Heart is set as if it were the entire and only Principle by which a judgment might be past upon our doings; as if our Actions so wholly deriv'd denomination from it, that they were pure which came from a clean upright heart; In opposition to which, I shall not doubt to put, That the external actions may have guilts peculiar to themselves, such as are truly their own, not shed into them by an evil mind; and a man may be wicked in the uprightness of his heart, when he does not intend any such thing, but rather the clean contrary. Our Saviour tells his Apostles, *The time will come that whosoever killeth you will think he doth God service*, John xvi. 2. *Λατρείαν προσφέρειν τῷ θεῷ*, that he does offer an Oblation or Worship, shall think his Murder Sacrifice; that that would propitiate for other faults; his Crime should seem Religion and attonement to him. (We have seen guilts put on such colours too:) and yet by these same actions which their hearts pursued with Holy aims, out of a Zeal to God, as S. Paul says, *Rom. x. 2.* they sacrificed themselves and their Nation to Gods Vengeance. Once more St. Paul does find reason to call himself the *chief of Sinners*, 1 Tim. i. 15. for the commissions of that time of which he says that *he served God with a pure Conscience*, ver. 3. did what he was persuaded in his heart he ought to do, pursued sincere intentions; and after says, *he had lived in all good conscience before God until that day*, Acts xxiii. 1. So that here was enough of the *clean heart*, a good and a pure conscience, and could his fiery persecutions by vertue of that flame within be Christened Holy Zeal? Could his Pure Conscience make his Bloody hands undefil'd? Oh no! 'twas *blasphemy*, and *persecution*, and *injury*, for all 'twas *Conscience*; for all his heart was clean from such intentions: *I was before a Blasphemer, and a Persecuter, and Injurious*, ver. 13. We may not think to shroud foul actions under handfom Meanings and an Innocent Mind; a Conscientious man may yet be chief of Sinners; St. Paul was so, he says, and a clean Heart will not suffice alone. Therefore *Heart* is put here accumulatively, as that whose cleanness must be added to the purity of Conversation to compleat it; and it implies what elsewhere he does set down more expressly *Clean Hands*, and a *Pure Heart*, all which a clean Heart may be set to signifie, because under Gods Holy Spirit it is the principal and only safe agent in the effecting of the rest, as that which only can make the other real, valuable, and lasting.

Psalm xxiv. 4.

When.

When a Disease hath once insinuated it self into the Vitals, spread through the Marrow, and seized the garrisons of Life, the Souls strong holds, and after sallies out into the outer parts in little pustles and unhandsome Ulcers; they who make application only to those outward Ulcers, may perchance smooth and cure the skin, make the unhandfomness remove and shift its seat, but all that while the man decays, the Forts of Life are undermin'd and sink, the vitals putrefie, and the whole Skin becomes but the fair Monument of its own rotten Inwards: Just so we have a *דבר חרע* an inward deep infusion, a bed or seed-plot of malignity, which sometimes shews it self in outward gross commissions; but if we only use the Lance or corrosive to these, we may perchance make a man shift a sin (thus it is possible that the *profane* may alter into *Factions*, or contrary, the *profuse* Proud man turn *Covetous*) but till the ground of these be purg'd away the man's not cur'd, but only the Disease is chang'd, and he is as unsound as ever. Gods severe Judgments that did lie so long so close upon us, like strong repercussives, may have stricken back the breakings out of former sins or inclinations: But then no care being taken of the Heart, the first heat sent them out again, and Mercy made a restauration of Vices too. But if the Heart once entertain a real and sincere sense of Religion, if it consent to thorough resolutions of Piety, as far as the man discerns, so far the Cure is perfected, and such are fitted for Gods goodness; for *truly God is good to Israel, even to those that are of such a clean Heart*; And so I fall upon them both together, first in the former sense propos'd.

That *Clean heart* signifies sincere true-hearted men, I have not only the assurance of Translations, and among them the *Syriack*, but the Text it self does evince it, because such only are indeed of *Israel*; for so our Saviour says, *Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile*, *John i. 47*. One like the Father of them *ἀνλας*. *Gen. xxv. 27*. a man unfeigned, that did seem nothing he was nor, all *Heart*. And such each *Israelite*, each man that does expect an interest in that goodness which the Lord hath for *Israel*, must be, *sincere* and *without guile*.

1. *In his Conversation with Men:*

I am not here to say, Sincerity is much, most *generous*, when it looks like a disingenuous fear to be afraid of my own mind, when my Heart dares not look into my Face, or speak in my Tongue, but must lurk under a disguise of words, or countenance, that are assum'd and not its own. Nor is it Secondly, my business to say it is the greatest *prudence*, or as we call it *Policy*, and that not only because it hath most reason to attend and to expect Gods Blessing, which other false acts cannot; but because though bold open Truth breeds Anger frequently, yet insincerity breeds hatred and contempt; there being no so ignominious thing as Reputation of Falseness, which yet is unavoidable, for events must discover insincerity, and then how piteous a thing he is when he must turn and wind still in more Mazes, till he be quite lost in his own shifts, and having no clue for his own Labyrinths, betrays himself more by his not knowing where he is; and men must needs be much more angry at pretences when they find them, than they were at unpleasing truth at first; when they discern their wants and expectations

Col. iii. 9.

Rom. xii. 9.

Ephes. iv. 25.

too deceived, themselves refus'd and mock'd, find nothing but a Vizard for a Friend: nay, find an Enemy indeed, for so is the Dissembler to mankind. Great Casuists do tell us, that the moral Obligations to speak truth depend upon a right that each man hath who is a member of humane society; Man being a sociable Creature meerly by vertue of his Speech: But speech could not contribute to cement Society, if there were not an obligation to speak truth; hence they conclude, that Children, Fools, and Madmen who are not truly members of Humane society, and also open Enemies, with whom we are in a state of War, and have broke that society as to all things but Laws and Articles of War; all these and these alone we may deceive, and then surely the false insincere man either esteems all others Fools and Madmen, or holds himself in a state of War with all Mankind, out of all Laws and Obligations of Humane society, and is an Enemy to the World; a Creature by himself, but that there are so many of them. But to pass by such Arguments, Gods Precepts of not *lying to one another*, oblige us and all those that require *faithfulness* and his Command that *Love should be without Dissimulation*; that while we speak gently, we should not be hard-hearted, give melting language soft as the airs of Flattery, but yet have crusted inwards, that cannot yearn nor stretch into compassion, *Jacobs voice* but *Esau's rough red hands*; Besides Gods reasons do enforce this, *Putting away lying, speak every one truth to his Neighbour, for we are members one of another*: So that Dissimulation is as great a Treachery as for the Eys to seek Traps to ensnare the Feet, the Hands to sauce stones for a Meal, which may perchance delight the Palate with a transient gust of that they are condited with, but cannot be digested into Nourishment. Go prepare for your hungry stomachs only festival Smells, which may encourage fainting Appetite, but do but mock its emptiness; go warm a cold part with a painted light, cover a naked member with a shadow; when your own parts would take it well from one another to be thus insincerely dealt with, then, not till then, will it be tolerable to Dissemble. *For we are members one of another*; all fellow-members of *Christs Body the Church*; this *Israel* to which the Text says *God is truly good*, not in presence or colour onely, he hath not the hypocrisies of kindness. Now such a true good God he will not be to them who are but counterfeit and mock-parts of his *Israel*, for what is there in such a man that he can be good to? To the good kind well-spoken part? Alas, that is but shape and varnish, 'tis not the man that speaks, 'tis all a motion and artifice, he puts it on, and then it vanisheth and dies, is not a subject for Gods kindness; or to the heart, but that is hard, and is not qualified for his Goodness, our true good God being onely such to those that are of a *clean, true, and sincere heart towards their brethren*.

Mat. xxiv. 51.

Luke xii. 46.

2. And much more, Secondly, is he such onely to them that are *sincere in their Religion to him*. Christ hath nothing but woes for Hypocrites; the 23d Chap. of S. *Matth.* is made up of them; when he would word Gods Vengeance to Sinners, he says, *he shall give them their portion with Hypocrites and Unbelievers*. Things strangely coupled sure, that they whose Life does seem all Faith, all Godliness, should be onely fit Company in *Tophet* for the Unbelievers, rank'd and condemned with them; that all their strong belief cannot remove them from an Infidel;

Sure

Sure they are far enough from the goodness of the Lord, when *the portion of Hypocrites* is Rhetorick for *Hell*, is its Torments exprest with Art.

They whose heart is not clean to God in their Pieties, but let their strictnesses take in some temporal aim besides, as Reputation with their Party, or getting Praise, or Wealth; they serve Mammon or Fame with Gods Religion, and make the very Worship of the Lord be the Idolatry of Covetousness or of Honour. If *Jehu* in his Executions on *Ahab* and his Family intend the cutting off the *Regal Line* as well as *Baals worship*, and with their Blood to purple his own Royalty, though God did bid him shed that blood, yet does it stain his Soul with crimson guilt; and God will punish him for his Obedience, *I will visit the blood of Jezreel upon the House of Jehu*, *Hos. i. 4.* But he that lets a vicious aim mix with his Vertue, and does good to an ill end, addresses *Gods Religion* to the *Devil*, and makes *Christ* minister to *Belial*; he does sin multiplyedly, both in his vicious intention, and in debauching Vertue to serve Vice, and he might much more innocently not have been Pious. Neither is that Vertue or Heart sincere whose intentions are not purely and meerly vertuous, but intend to compass some Religious end by means that are not lawful; For such intentions are not clean but mixt with Vice; and 'tis sure I cannot please God with such kind of holy meanings. If *Saul* will sacrifice with the Sheep and Oxen he was bid to destroy, his very worship loseth him the Throne of *Israel*: Nor an I serve God with such Pieties. God never does require an action which he sees I cannot compass without sin, for he requires no man to sin, for that were to command me to break his Commands, and I were bound to disobey him in obedience to him, *Shall I speak wickedly for God*, saith *Job* *Job xiii. 7.* and then shall I do so? Such Religious intentions, the justice of those ends, will never qualifie me for Gods goodness, when it but makes Damnation just to me, for so *S. Paul* affirms, *Rom. iii. 5, 6, 7, 8.* In fine, if there be any wickedness in the heart, it gives so foul a tincture to whatever pious actions we perform, that they become sin to us. 'Tis true, *Prayer is as the Incense*, *David* says, and the lifting up of our hands is like the Evening Sacrifice; but if the heart of him that Prays have any heats of Malice in it, truly that man does light his Incense with strange fire, kindles his sacrifice with the flames of *Hell*, for so *S. James* does call those heats. He that gives God any of his performances, and hath a naughty Heart, like *Nadab* and *Abihu*, he presents his Offering in an unhallowed Censer, and all his holy worship will get nothing else from Heaven for him but a consuming fire as theirs did. He that will offer any thing to God, must take a care it be not tainted with such mixtures, which spoil all the Religion, making it not sincere, and also spoil the Heart by making it not clean, and undefiled. The last remaining sense,

A Clean and undefiled Heart.

Of those things which our Saviour says defile the man, some are meerly sins of the Heart, such as may be consummated within the Soul; and for the perpetration of which a spirit is sufficient to it self; such are *Pride*, especially *spiritual pride*, the sin of those that think none holy as themselves, and cast the black doom of Reprobation upon all that do not comply with their Opinions and interests: such also are *uncontentedness* with our estates, inward repinings at the dispositions of Providence concerning

cerning us, black malice, bitter envyings. Now in these as the mind does need no outward members to consummate them, requires no accessary Organs to work them out; so neither does it require any outward accessary guilt to make them liable to condemnation: we know 'twas one sin of the spirit onely that made Angels Devils. If a foul body be abominable to the Lord, shall a foul spirit be less odious? he that defiles his Soul offends God in a much nearer concern of his, because that speaks nearer relation to him than the Body: this was only his workmanship, made out of Earth, the Spirit was created out of himself; a foul body is but filthy Clay, but he that does pollute his Soul does putrefie the Breath of God, and stains a beam of the Divinity.

The other sort of things that are said to come from the Heart, and to Defile, are those which S. Paul calls *works of the Flesh*, such as if they be committed must be committed outwardly, *Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, Revenge, Wrath and Contentions, Seditions, Factions, Schisms, all Uncleanesses, &c.* In these indeed the Heart can be but partial Actor, the utmost it can do, is to desire and to intend them, and to contrive and manage the designs of compassing them; which yet Providence or the Innocence of others may put out of the reach of mans power, or his own temporal fears may make him not dare to set upon them, though he do cherish the desires. Now if they be obstructed from committing, most men use to conclude gently of their guilts while they do keep within the Heart; the Execution of them is the onely thing that does look mortal; and till the *sin be perfected there is no death in it*. And truly I confess that, as it happens many times, on a sudden surprize of soul, when a bright gilded temptation strikes the heart, and dazles the mind, we see that the Will rushes on it instantly, consents and wishes heartily; yet within a while the Spirit does recover out of the surprize, puts by the thrusts of fancy, and the stabs of the temptation, and that Will languishes and dies like a *velleity*, as if it had been nothing but a wounding; and now the man would not by any means consent to the commission: In this case though there be a guilt to be repented of, and cleansed with many tears, yet this is Innocence in the comparison; but if the Will purpose, contrive, and do its utmost, it is the same to the man as if he had committed. 'Twere easie to demonstrate this, that whatsoever evil thing a man intends and does fixedly resolve, he is guilty of, though he do nothing, or though the thing he chance to do be never so much lawful. Those sayings of St. Paul, *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is no meat unclean of it self, but to him that esteemeth any thing unclean, to him it is unclean, Rom. xiv. 14. and he that doubteth is damned if he eat, ver. 23.* These could have no truth in them, unless the heart by choosing and pursuing to the utmost any thing that it does judg unlawful, incurr'd the guilt of that unlawfulness, even to Damnation; and all that meerly by it self without the Action, which in that case had nothing sinful in it. A weight that is upheld by a mans hand, and otherwise would rush down to the earth, does surely gravitate as much, it is as heavy though it do not fall quite down, as if it did, and, were it let alone, it would: A settled tendency, a resolv'd inclination to sin, that presseth with its utmost agitation is that weight, which though it may perchance be stop'd in its career, yet it tends to the *Abyss, its center*, and will not

not rest but in that Pit that hath nor rest nor bottom; the Heart in this case is as liable as it can be, because here it hath done its worst, and such a Will shall be imputed to its self.

And now I need not tell those who are still designing sin, or mischief in the heart, although it never dares come out of those recesses, how far they are removed from the *goodness of God to Israel*. A Father finds a way to prove such souls have larger doses of Gods Vengeance, who when he had asserted that the soul does not die with the body, and then was ask'd what it did in that long interval, for sure it is not reasonable that it should be affected with any anticipations of the future Judgment, because the business of the day of Judgment should be reserved to its own day, without all prelibation of the sentence; and the restitution of the Flesh is to be waited for, that so both soul and body may go hand in hand in their Recompences as they did in their demerits, joynt Partners in the Wages as they were in the Works: To this he answers: The Soul does not divide all its operations with the Body, some things it acts alone, and if there were no other cause it were most just the Soul should there receive without the Body the dues of that which here it did commit without the Body: That's for the former sort of sins, those meerly of the Heart: And for the latter sort, the Soul is first engaged in the commission, that does conceive the sin, lays the design of compassing, and does contrive and carry on the machination; and then why should not that be first in Punishment, which is the first in the Offence?

Tertull. de
Anima. cap.
58.

Go now and reckon that thy outward gross Transgressions are the only dangerous and guilty ones and slight thy sins of Heart; but know that while thy flesh is sleeping in the quiet Grave at rest and ease, thy Spirit then's in Torments for thy Fleashes sins, and feels a far severer Worm than that which gnaws thy Body: Poor Soul! Eternity of Hell from Resurrection to For-ever, is not enough to punish it, all that while it must suffer with the Body, but it must have an age of Vengeance besides particularly for it self, to plague it for those things it could not execute, and punish it for what it did not really enjoy; only because it did allow it self to desire and contrive them; and it must be tormented for those unsatisfied desires: And though indeed desires where they are violent, if they be not allayed by satisfaction, are but so much agony, yet do they merit and pull on them more; these Torments shall be plagued, and the soul suffer for its very passion, even from Death to the last Judgment; and 'tis but just that being it usurp'd upon the pleasures and the sins of Flesh, it should also seize on and take possession of the Vengeance appointed for those sins, it should invade and should usurp their condemnation.

But why do I stand pressing aggravations against uncleanness of Heart in an Age, when God knows Vice hath not so much modesty or fear to keep within those close and dark restraints? Instead of that same Cleanness which the Text requires, we may find Purity indeed of several sorts, but 'tis either *pure Fraud*, or *pure Impiety*; the one of these does make a strange expression very proper, *pure Corruption*, for so it is, sincere and without mixture, nothing but it self, no spots of Clean to chequer it, but all stain: The other is pure white indeed, but it is that of *whited Sepulchres*; a Life as clean as Light, a bright pure Conver-

2 Cor. xi. 14.

tion, but it shines with that light onely which *Satan* does put on when he transforms himself into an *Angel of Light*, and it is but a glory about a fiend. But yet this shines however, whereas others do stand Candidates of Vice, and would be glorious in wickedness; and that is such a splendor as if *Satan* should dress himself with the shine of his own flaming Brimstone, and make himself a glory with the streamings of his Lake of Fire. And yet thus is the World, we do not onely see men serve some one peculiar vicious inclination, and cherish their own wickedness, but they make every Vice their own, as if the Root of bitterness branch'd out in each sort of Impiety in them, such fertile soyls of sin they are, here insincerity were to be wish'd; and where there is not cleanness that there were a Mask, that there were the Religion of Hypocrisy. We may remember God was good to *Israel* of old by Obligation and performance; the one as great as he could enter, the other great to Miracle and astonishment; when after seventy years Captivity and Desolation, he did rebuild a Temple where there was no Monument of its Ruines, and raised a Nation and Government of which there was no Reliques. And yet at last when the Religion of some turned into Faction, of others into Prophaneness; when the strictest Sect of them, the *Pharisees*, became most holy outwardly, to have the better means *Βλαψαμίζοντας*, to mischief those that were not of their Party, and got a great opinion of Sanctity, *ὡς ἐ κατὰ τὴ βασιλείῳς τὴ λέγοντες ἐ κατ' ἀρχιερέων εὐθὺς πιστεύουσι*, so as to be believed in whatsoever they did speak against the King or chief Priests; and that so far as to be able openly to practise against both, and raise Commotions. They are *Josephus's* words of them; and when another Sect, the Zelots, the most pernicious of all, faith *Bertram*, did commit Murders, Sacriledg, Prophanations, and all kind of Villanies, *ἐπ' ἀγαθοῖς ἐπιτινδύμασι*, with good Intentions, faith the same *Josephus*; and when those who did not separate into Sects, but were the Church of *Israel*, became lukewarm, supine, and negligent in their Profession, yea, and licentious and Prophane, fit only to be joyned with *Publicans*, in *Christs* expressions; when sin grew generally Impudent; when they did live as if they would be Scandalous as well as vicious, as if they lov'd the guilt as much as the delights of sin, and cared not to be wicked to themselves, but must debauch, as if they did enjoy the ruine of other persons, sinning just as the Devil does, who does not taste the sin, but feasts upon the Sinners Condemnation: Then did God execute a Vengeance whose prediction was fit to be mistaken for that of the Day of Judgment, and whose event almost fulfill'd the terrors of that day.

Jos. Antiq. l.
13. c. 23. edit.
Basil. 1544.

Βασιλεῖσι
νόμοι κα-
λίστα ἀντι-
πεσόντων.
Joi. Antiq. l.
17. c. 3.
Ἀλώσεως. l. 4.
c. 12.

Psal. Cxxvi. 1.

I need not draw resemblances, shew how Gods goodness to our *Israel* does equal that to them; applying to our selves their Raptures; how when the Lord turned the Captivity of our Sion, we also were like them that dream, surprized with Mercy. Indeed as in a Dream; Ideas are not always well connected, there is no chain or thred of fancies, and the thoughts are not joyned regular and even; but there are breaches and disorder in them still, the Images of sleep being like *Nebuchadnezzar's*, made of such things as do not well unite. So there is something I confess, like this in our condition, for with our gold and silver, our precious things that are restored, there is Iron and Clay, not onely meaner mixtures, but such things as will not close, or be soder'd, but do incline

to

to part asunder, and would moulder and tend towards dissolution; and just as in a Dream, the composure of things is not so undisturb'd; but that there is some confus'dness; neither our affections nor practices do perfectly cement; but yet I hope it is no *dream of mercy*, 'tis not a *Phantasm* or an *Apparition of Gods kindness*, but the Lord will be truly good to us.

Yet if we do proceed as *Israel*, and equal it in provocations: —

But I will make no parallels, publique clamors do that too loud; these do display the factions of iniquity among us, and muster up the several parties of our Vices too; and each man is as perfect in the guilts of all sides that he is not of, as if their memories were the books that shall be opened at the Day of Judgment; some men can point you out our *Pharisees* and *Zelots*; others can shew you our *prophane licentious Professors*, Lay and Clergy both; and indeed we need not go far to seek any or all of these; nor do we want our *Sadduces*. Now if all this be true, then as those were the signs of the Son of Man's coming to them in Judgment, so we may fear they are his Harbingers to us. If they be, I am sure the only way to make his coming good to us, is to prepare for it by cleansing from all filthiness and insincerity; then though he come clothed with a Glory of flaming Vengeance, yet will those streams of Fire find nothing to consume or wash away in us; but through that flame the *pure in heart shall see God*, so as that that sight shall be the Beatifick Vision: Yea, *they shall see the Goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living, they shall see Jerusalem in prosperity all their life long, and Peace here upon Israel, and in his light hereafter in the Jerusalem that is above*. To the state of which glorious Light He bring us all, who is the *brightness of his Fathers Glory: To whom be Glory, and dominion for ever and ever*.

Amen.

The Third
SERMON,
 Preached at
WHITE-HALL.
Second Wednesday in Lent.

LEVIT. XVI. 31.

Ye shall Afflict your Souls by a Statute for ever.



THE words are one Single Precept concerning one part of the Celebration of a Day : I shall not take the Precept asunder into parts, for it hath none; but shall frame my Discourse to answer three Enquiries that naturally offer themselves to be consider'd from these words : And they are,

1. What the Importance of the thing commanded is ? What is required in this Injunction, *Ye shall afflict your Souls?*
2. What Usefulness and Efficacy this Duty had upon that time in which it was prescribed ? what the *Afflicting of the Soul* contributed to the work of that Day ? that it should be made so indispensable an ingredient of its performances, tied to it *by a Statute for ever?*
3. Whether that *for ever* do reach us ? which is the Application, and brings all home to us.

First, What the Import of the thing commanded, *the Afflicting of the Soul* is ?

The *Arab.* and *Targum of Jerusalem* Translate it *Fasting* ; yea, and Maimonid. a Learned *Rabbine* says, that wheresoever these two words are put together, that is meant. And indeed they are often joyned in Scripture to express it, *Psalms xxxv. 13. I afflicted my Soul with Fasting.* And the Prophet *Isaiah* speaking of this Day in my Text, says, *Is it such a Fast that I have chosen ? a day for a man to afflict his Soul ? Isa. lviii. 5.*
 Some-

Somewhat a strange expression it is; for Fasting does afflict the Body properly, and yet we find the like too in the other Extream: We read of *pampering the Soul*, Psalm lxxviii. 18. *They required* לֶחֶם וְיֵינִי *meat for their Souls*; not to supply the Hunger of their Body, that they had before; but to indulge the Lusts of their mind; they did not want for food, but variety; Festival diet, and a Table furnish'd they would have; and this luxuriancy and wantonness of Meat the Scripture calls *meat for the Soul*: Such as God says in other places *the Soul lusteth after*. Indeed forc'd meats, and things that please meerly by being rare and dear, or by being extravagant, these do not feed the Appetite but Opinion, and the Mind; it is the Soul that only hungers after these: Thus when I look after Wine in the glass, and make my Eye a Critique of its accidents, and by the mode and fashion of it teach it to please or displease my judgment, I do not thirst after the cool moisture of it, but the sparkling flame, and do not drink the Wine, but the flavour and colour, and this is all but Notion. Now certainly these are not proper objects for our Appetites, *meat for the Body*, says the Scripture, and it is the Stomach and not the Imagination that is hungry; nor is it Fancy or the Soul that thirsts, but 'tis the Palate, so that these are unnatural and monstrous satisfactions.

And yet to bring mens selves to this, is one of the great masteries of Wit and Art, to force themselves to find a relish in these things, and then contrive them, is a piece of Skill which the advantages of parts and fortune are desirable mostly, as they are useful to: And a well studied Epicure, one expert in the mysteries of Eating, is a singularly qualified and most grateful Person.

It were in vain to ask what else such men can be good for? that being their Profession, they are out at most other things: Indeed the Soul that dwells in Dishes, and is stew'd in its own Luxuries, grows loose and does dissolve, its sinews melt, all its firmness of mind forsakes it, the man is strong for nothing but for Lusts, his faculties are choak'd and stifled, they stagnate and are mir'd within him, and there corrupt and putrefie. And then what Cranes will force out thence, and wind up such a Soul into the practices and expectations of Piety? will make it mind and entertain the hopes and Duties of Religion? what macerations, what Chymistry will defecate a Spirit so incarnated, and rectifie it into such a fineness as befits that state where all their blessedness have no sensual relish, but are sublimed into Divine and purely Spiritual.

Lord God! that thou shouldst shed a rational Angelick Soul into us, a thing next to the Being of thy Self, to animate only the Organs of Intemperance, and Gluttony, and their appendant lusts! Only inspire us how to be but more sagacious, indeed but more luxurious Brutes, when thou hast set us here to train and discipline our selves for a condition of such glorious Joys as are fit to entertain Souls of Reason with, and to make them blessed; which to enter upon, our Bodies must drop from us, our Souls must be clarified from Flesh, and Flesh it self refined into Spirit; that we should make our selves Antipodes to this, walk contrary to all, and so debase our spirits as that they are qualified for no other satisfaction, but those of dull sense and carnality.

Adam

Adam fell his great Fall by Eating, but ever since men fall further by riotous intemperate Eating. He fell from Paradise, and they from Reason; the Man sinks into Beast, and the Soul falls into very Flesh, and hath no other faculties or appetites but fleshly ones.

Such people of all others are not to be raised up by Religion; their fulness gives no place to that, but does exclude it. God did complain of this of old, *Deut. xxxii. 15. Jesurun waxed fat and kicked: that we may see they want no brutish quality, who do allow themselves the appetite of Brutes; they that pamper themselves like to fed Horses, will also neigh like them and kick even him that fed them; thou art waxen fat, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation. When they came once where they did suck honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty Rock,* *Deut. xxxii. 13.* they could not mind the Rock of their Salvation.

Indeed this sensuality as it consumes Estates, eats Time, and all the faculties of the Mind, so it devours all Religion too, it hath not only a particular opposition to some one duty as the other Vices have, but by a direct influence it destroys the whole foundation of Vertue and obedience to God; I mean subordination of the lower appetite to Reason and Religion, which it renverses quite, and breeds an universal cachexy of the Soul as well as Body.

For ever since Adam did eat of the forbidden Fruit, the carnal mind we know is neither subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be, as S. Paul says, *Rom viii. 7.* because Gods Commands are restraints upon those things which Flesh desires eagerly. Now therefore while that Mind is unsubdued, it must needs lust against the Spirit for those things that are forbidden, nor endure to be limited; which he that feeds it, is so far from working towards, that he does give it still more provocation and more power, and makes the Flesh more absolute; for it is clear that Plenty does encrease all its desires and their unruliness; it ministers both vigor to it by which it is enabled to fulfill its lusts, and it ministers aptness and incitation also, both by custom of satisfaction, and by adding heat which makes it more prone to rebel, and more impossible to be kept under. The progress of this is apparent in the Scripture, *Exod. xxxii. 6. The People sat down to Eat and Drink and rose up to Play: Lusum non denotasset nisi impudicum; he means, to play the wantons.* But Jeremy is plainer, *Chap. v. 7, 8. How shall I pardon thee for this? thy Children have forsaken me, when I had fed them to the full, they then committed Adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in Harlots houses: Nor stays it there, but does encrease as well as feed to an Excess; we may discern that by the Wisemans Prayer, xxiii. Ecclesiast. 6. O Lord, Father and God of my Life, Let not the greediness of the Belly, nor the lust of the Flesh, take hold of me, and give not over me thy Servant to an impudent mind,* Gyant-like he had called it in the Verse before; and sure the Wiseman in the Proverbs apprehended it as such, and dreaded it accordingly; as if Bellies full gorg'd were those Mountains which the Gyants cast up to storm Heaven on: He look'd upon this Vice as that which would bid defiance to God, and out him, and therefore thinks it necessary to beseech the Lord not to afford him so much as would furnish Plenty, *Prov. xxx. 8. Give me not Riches, feed me with food convenient for me; נתינתני לחם* with an Allowance, with no more

more than is sufficient for me, *lest I be full and deny thee, and say who is the Lord.* It seems such persons know no other God besides their Belly; nor is it any wonder if a *Soul made Flesh* cannot well apprehend a *Deity that is a Spirit*, or believe it, but thinks all Notions of such beings to be contradiction, when once by the suffusions of Carnality all the impressions of a Spirit are wrought out of it self: And truly this is the most natural and certain way to become Atheists.

Whether this time that hath been almost always set aside for strict Severities, and to work out Repentance (and if it be not so intended now, I know not what pretence did call us hither) (for though there be some relaxation of the severer Dye of this time, sure there is no indulgence of that Penitence which the strictness of this time design'd) and let some men talk what they please of the Intention of their Statutes, yet these Assemblies certainly were not intended for the increase of Cattel, and advance of Fishing; these were for higher aims of Piety: Now whether we employ it so much towards this as *to afflict our Souls*, i. e. *our appetites*, and to revenge our superfluities upon our selves, and to teach our desires to be denied: Or whether we do teach the Dye of this season to be but a variety of Luxury, and if the Law did not command it, and so make it Pressure by giving it the inconvenience and the uneasiness of being duty and obedience; our selves could make it be one of the changes of our Vice, only another course, a diverse service of the same Riot, and so defeat the Law by our obedience to it: Or whether we do break the Law outright, and to our superfluities add disobedience to Authority, whether we do the one or other is not for me to say. But if the Nation and we our selves have any sins to be repented of, and we design this season for that use (as sure some season must be so employed, and why not this as well, rather indeed than any other;) if we be not of those that would be glad to see all thrown again into Confusion; glad to see a return of the same Vengeance, as indeed a return of the same sins, and the abuse of Mercies seem to call for it, while men do live as if they thought God had wrought all these Miracles merely to give them opportunity to serve their Vices or their other ends, to put them in a way to get Places, Estates, and Dignities; and by uncharitable gains, hard-hearted griping, yea by false unworthy treacherous Arts, to heap up Wealth, to raise their Families, or feed their Lusts: These, these cry out to God to renew his Commission to the Sword, to pass through all the Land again, and embowel it self in Church and State; these call for it as loud as the haranguing Prayers of Seditious Men; and the Lord knows there are too many hands that would unsheath it, if God do not interpose to hinder, and well we have deserv'd he should. But if we would endeavour to engage him by Repentance, that will require the Afflicting of the Soul by some severities. Do not mistake your selves; Repentance, as it cannot be wrought out amidst our courses, that were contradiction to return, and yet go on; so also it will not be wrought out amidst the Comforts, as we call the jollities, of life.

Tertullian is very pleasant with those who did dislike that in their Penitencies, they were by the Church prescrib'd to put off Mirth and put on Sackcloth, and take Ashes for Bread; *Come*, says he, *reach that Rodkin there to braid my Hair, and help me now to practise all those Arts that*

that are in Mode to attire it; give me the washes of that Glass, the blushes of that Paper, the foyles which that Box hath to beautifie and dress my Cheeks; come and set out and dress my Table too, let me have Fowl with costly forc'd and not a natural Fat; or let me have cramb'd Fish, and cram my Dishes also; get me chearful Wine too: and if any one ask why I do thus indulge my self? Why I will tell him, I have sin'd against my God, and am in danger of Perdition, and therefore I am in great trouble; I macerate (do you not see the signs of it?) and excruciate my self, I take these fearful careful ways that I may reconcile God to me whom I have offended.

Alas, to humble ones self thus in fulness, and to afflict the Soul in chearful plenties, is such a thing as none but he that sinks under the surfeit of those Plenties understands. I'm sure the Lord, when he required his People to repent, required them then to discipline, and use severities upon themselves; they were to fast or dye: God took the execution, for whatsoever Soul it be that shall not be Afflicted that same day shall be cut off from among his People, *Levit. xxiii. 29.* Even cut off by God himself.

And I do verily persuade my self, that one great cause, why men that have sometimes thought to reform their lives, and do resolve against their Courses, yet repent of their Repentance, their resolutions untwist, and become frail as threds of Cobweb, the first assault of a temptation does break through them, is, they do not use mortifications, to work their averfations high and strong against their sins, and fix their resolutions. The universal sense of the whole Primitive Church gives me confidence in this persuasion, who for that very reason in their penitential Excommunications did inflict such severities, as 'tis almost incredible that Christians would submit to; yet they beg'd to be censur'd into; and those had *S. Paul* for their precedent. But now Repentance are but dislikes, little short unkindnesses at our sins, and wouldings to do better: On some moving occasion, if Gods Hand or his Spirit lash, it may be Tears will gush out of the Wound, and we in angry sadness do intend against our Vices; but when that is over, and the Flesh by indulgences prepared to make or answer a temptation, we fall again, and then it may be shake the head and curse the sin; but yet again commit it, if the invitation be fair: And then are very sorry, account our selves unhappy, who lie under such a violent infirmity, but act it still. Now if we consider how it comes to pass that we go round like men enchanted, in a Circle of Repenting and of Sinning, we shall find it is for want of Discipline upon our selves; for had we strove to make our humiliations more low and full of pungent sorrow, the Soul would start and fly at the first glance of that which cost it so much anguish; but who would fear to act that sin which puts him to so little trouble to repent of? as a sad thought, a sigh, a wish, and a loose purpose, thin intentions, and that's all.

Do not complain of the Infirmity of the Flesh for this, and say thou wouldst live Spiritually, but the frailty of thy sensual part betrays thee; its stings and incitations make thee start from duty, and goad and force thee into actions which otherwise thou neither shouldst or wouldst commit. 'Tis thou thy self that arm'st thy Flesh with all its stings; thou givest it strengths, whereby it does subdue the Spirit;

thou waterest thy desires with Wines; thou feedest them with strong meat and teachest them to crave; thou cocker'st them with thy indulgence, and thou dost treat Temptations to sin, dost invite wickedness, and nourish the occasions of Ruin; and then it is no wonder if thy resolutions be not strong enough, there is no way but by Austerities to mortifie all inclinations that stir against the Spirit, and by denying satisfactions to thy Appetite, to calm and moderate thy affections to every thing below, and then Temptations will have neither Aid nor Avenue.

But Secondly, *Tou shall Afflict your Souls*, cannot be meant only *that ye shall Afflict your Bodies*; the Spirit also must be troubled, and we must *rent the Heart as well as Garments*; that is indeed a Sacrifice fit for a Propitiation day, for it is such a one as God will not despise, *Psal. li. 17.* and without which all others are but vain Oblations.

God may call *fasting the Afflicting of the Soul*, because it is the most appropriate and natural means to work it; but when he calls it so he does intend it should produce it. Austerities are *humilificandi hominis disciplina*, as *Tertul.* says, *Humiliation Discipline*; but yet they have not always that effect. The *Pharisee* that fasted twice a week did not mortifie at all, but his Humiliation made him lofty, his emptiness filled him with wind, and puffed him up, and the *Publican* was more justified than he. And late experiences have taught us, that Fasting does not always humble, when it did gape for Sovereignty, and did afflict them into Power only, when there attended it a *sacra fames*, an hunger after Holy things, and such as all the reliëts of old Sacriledg could not allay, but it devoured Church and State, and yet crav'd still: And the throat of these fasting men was an open Sepulchre indeed; open to bury, and that could no more be satisfied than the Grave.

But 'tis not only these demure impieties, and those that are devout in wickedness, and act it in Religion and the Fear of God, I have to speak against:

But in the general, If Fasting do not humble, and those severities that wear the Flesh break not the heart too and make it contrite, then they are lost upon us, and do not profit us. All these strictnesses of *bodily* and outward *exercise*, as *S. Paul* calls it, are acts of discipline prescribed to make the Sorrows of Repentance more severe and operative, and so to be the Correctives of the distempers of the Soul, to quell the risings of the Appetite and Passions, and bring the sensual part of us under obedience to Reason and Religion; to make all calm and even in us, and put us in the frame of Men and Christians, of Rational and Pious Creatures. And if they do not work this in us, if the Soul do not meet in the performances, they are not acceptable in themselves at all; These are only the *mint anise* and *cumin* of our *Picces*; and as *Origen* says, the *condimenta altuum* the fauces of Religion, not the main standing parts of it, which he therefore that offers solitary gives God a *Sacrifice of Sallads*, and thinks that will be a Sin-Offering. They do mistake themselves who cherish any hope from having spent a day, or *Lent* of abstinence; if the Excesses of their Vices be not made over, and evacuated by it; if they continue still full gorg'd with their iniquity; or who think all is well, they have atton'd by having bowed down the head like a bulrush; if the Soul were not

not also humbled in them; for as *S. Paul* does say, *I may give all my goods to feed the poor, yet have no Charity, and I may give my body to be burnt, yet in those Martyr-fires there may be no heats of Love to God, and then all these profit me nothing, 1 Cor. xiii. 3.* So I may chasten my self too, and yet not receive correction or be disciplin'd, and then Gods punishments are still due to me.

That Church indeed which hath found out the easie expiation of Indulgences, that hath the Treasure of Christ's merits and all the supererogations of the Saints at her dispose, and by Commission can issue them at pleasure out, and apply those merits to mens uses not by *Sacraments*, but by a *Bull or Brief*, and not require *Gospel conditions of Faith and Repentance* in the Persons that receive them, but *visiting a Church in Rome, ascending the steps in such a Chappel in the Lateran* on such a day, shall give a plenary remission from sin and punishment; the saying of such a Prayer over daily shall do it for fourscore thousand years (could they but make a Lease for men to live and sin out the indulgence too, that would get them good store of Chapmen) that Church I say, may give encouragement to hope that God may be compounded with at easie rates; that for a Surfeit I may give a Meal and God will pardon it, and let me have Wine too into the bargain (for they allow afflicting of our Souls in Wine) that some weeks change of Dyet may go for a change of Life, for indeed these come up somewhat nearer the just value than some of their Prices. But though there be all the reason in the World they should let men out of Purgatory on what condition they please, when themselves onely put them in, and make the breath of a few *Pater noster's* quite blow out those flames which burn no where but in their Doctrines: Yet when without any commission from Christ they make *Attrition* able to secure men from Hell, and an *Indulgence* able to release them out of Purgatory; when they make *new conditions of Pardon*, that is *new Gospel, new ways of application of Christs Merits*, and though our Saviour God when he found in his heart to dye for us, yet in the Agonies of his Compassion could not find in his heart to give us easier terms of Life than such as do require *Contrition, Humiliation, and Amendment*, which they commute so cheaply with his Vicar: We justly stand astonish'd at such usurpation on *Christs Blood and Merits*, that does assign them at these rates.

I make no question but easie expiations get them many Converts. *Rome* from its first foundation grew from being an *Asylum* to the dissolute; but they that go away upon such hopes, 'tis to be feared that easiness betrays them into sins from which those Expiations cannot rescue them, and at once makes them *Profelytes* to *Rome* and *Hell*. Nor are our trusts much more secure, if we rely upon our *opus operatum*, too, our little outward strictnesses, unless the Soul be engag'd, and except there be inward life of Religion, all those will not avail: If I deny my self my meals, and give my self my sins, that is so far from expiation that it aggravates: I am an argument against my self that my crimes are incorrigible, when I will have them though I cut off the Instruments and foment of them, and though I meddle not with the Temptation, yet I seize the sin.

Aug. Enchir.
c. 70.

What S. Austin does say of Alms, *In melius vita mutanda, & per eorum elemosynas de peccatis præteritis propitiandus est Deus; non ad hoc emendatus quodammodo ut semper liceat impune peccare.* This is applicable to these performances also, our lives must be Reformed, and so on that Repentance and these strictnesses God will be reconciled, and our offences done away; but he will not be brib'd by these to let us alone in them; he is not gratified by such performances so as to wink at Vices for their sakes, and suffer us in our Rebellions upon such compositions as these; take a Reward to spare the Guilt: Nor is he such a soft and easie God as to take them for payment of that infinite Debt we owe; that which he bought off with the *Blood of God* shall not be ours at such unworthy prices. The Prophet *Micah* seeking for a Present to appease him with, rejects all the *Jewish rites* though God prescribed them, as insufficient; and in them all things of the like external kind. *Mic. vi. 6, 7. Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the most high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or with ten thousand Rivers of Oyl? shall I give my first-born for my Transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? If I do offer up whole Hecatombs to God, will that atone for having offered up too plentifully to my Genius? Or if I do remove my Riots from my Table to the Altar, and change my few extravagant Dishes into whole Herds of thousand Sacrifices, shall I by doing so remove the guilt too of my Luxuries? If I give God ten thousand Rivers for my overflowing Cups, will the Intemperance be wash'd away in those? Or shall I think to expiate an Adultery with a Child? and for that momentary and unclean delight give up the lovely and first issue of my lawful Bed? And who will be content to be his own Priest in such manner? to pay such Sacrifices for sins? But yet that will not do, as it cost more to Redeem Souls, which not Rivers of Oyl can cleanse, but streams must flow out of the Heart of Christ to do it; nor the fruit of Mans body make a satisfaction for, but the eternally begotten Son of the Divinity, and none but the first born of God alone, for thus expiation of sins was wrought: Even so to make that expiation mine, besides reliance on it, I must transcribe the Copy of the Sufferings of that Son, transplant the Garden of *Gethsemane* into my breast. If his Soul be sorrowful even unto Death, my Soul must be afflicted too; Humiliations must prostrate me upon my face to deprecate that Fire and Brimstone, burning Tempest that is the portion of the Sinners Cup, saith David: *O my Father let this Cup pass from me!* The lustful Feavers of my blood must excern themselves in cold sweat of fear and grief, in Agonies of Penitence; and my excessive draughts not onely make me to cry out *I thirst*, but give me *Vinegar and Gall to drink*; sorrow as bitter as my riotous egestions have been; my Oaths that have struck through the Name of God, must pierce my Soul with grief as pungent as his Thorns and Nails. In a word, I must so afflict my Soul as to crucify the body of sin, and nail it to his Cross. And this is that which in its own proportion was required of the Jews this Day here in the Text, to the work of which Day how the Afflicting of the Soul in both the given senses does contribute, was my Second and the next Enquiry.*

Secondly,

Secondly, What this Day was the Verse before the Text informs us, it was their Day of Expiation or Atonement. Now that the Jews esteem Fasting and Humiliation expiatory Sacrifices, appears from a Form of Prayer which even yet they use on such a day where he that fasted says, *O Lord the Governour of all the World, I have now finished my Fast before thee, thou knowest that when we had a Temple standing; the man that sinned was bound to expiate it by a Sacrifice, the Blood of which was poured out, and the Altar consumed the Fat to make amends for his offence; but now by reason of our many wickednesses, we have neither a Temple, Altar, or Priest to make Atonement for us; I beseech thee therefore O Lord my God the God of my Fathers, to accept of that little portion of my own Flesh and Blood which this days Fasting hath torn from me, in lieu of a Sin-offering, and be thou reconciled unto me for thy mercies sake.* Thus when he cannot give a Lamb for his Transgression, he gives some of himself, he offers *Hunger* for *Shewbread*, and *Thirst* for a *Drink-offering*, he consecrates a *Meal* instead of a *Beast*, and sheds a *sower fasting sigh* for *Incense*; and this he hopes God will accept as Sacrifice. And truly the Text says no day of Expiation could be kept without it. Nor does the Scripture want great instances of its effect towards Atonement of Gods wrath: How when Judgment was given on a Nation or Person, and Execution going out against them, yet this revers'd the Sentence; *Ahab* is a great proof of this, *1 King. xxi. 27.* *And it came to pass when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his Clothes, and put Sackcloth upon his flesh, and Fasted, and lay in Sackcloth and went softly: And the word of the Lord came unto Elijah the Tishbite saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me I will not bring the evil in his days.* One Fasting-day secured a Life; the weaknesses it brought upon the body, upheld it against all Gods threats, Vengeance pronounc'd and coming out against him falls to ground if *Ahab* humble and afflict his Soul. Gods stretch'd out Arm will not strike Sackcloth, nor wound through Fasting Garments: One fit of it removes his Judgments a whole Age; and had it been sincere and persevering, how had it wip'd them out to everlastingness?

Ninive is another instance of the practice and success of this even among the *Heathens*.

Nor should it seem to have less Efficacy among Christians: The Primitive Fathers call these severities *Satisfaction for sin*, and *Compensations*, the *Price with which they are bought off*, the *things that cover them*, and *blot them out*, and which *Propitiate and appease God for them*; not in their sense who force up these Expressions to a strange height of meaning; and yet have quite beat down the Practice as to the publique wholesom use of them out of the Church. But though these sayings assign not the Power and just Efficacy of that discipline in it self, yet they do the acceptance and effect of it by virtue of Christs Satisfaction: A Fainting Body cannot bear indeed the weight of our iniquities, nor will lowest prostrations in the dust bury them in the dust, or Tears alone blot out our Guilt; but Christ having done that which is effectual to all this, and requiring no more of thee to make that thine (as he does every where most solemnly avow) but faithful humbling of thy self in an afflictive sorrow for what's past, and so to mor-

tific

Tertul. de
pudicit. c. 13.
& de pœnit.
c. 10.
Cyp. Ep. 9.
Edit. Priorij.
1666. ep. etiam
26. & lib. de
lapsis. Aug.
enchir. c. 71.
Hieron. in
Joel. & in
ep. ad Eu-
stoch. de ob.
Paul.
Tertul. de
Pœnit. c. 6.
Orig. Hom. 15.
in Levit.
Ambros. de
Pœnit. l. 2.
c. 5.
Orig. Hom. 6.
in Exod.
Cyp. Ser. de
Lapsis. Chrys.
Hom. 41. ad
pop. Antioch.

tifie as to work out Repentance; the doing this is doing what he does require, and consequently will accept: These satisfy the *Command*, and therefore *God*, though not by a *condignity of performance*, yet as *Conditions* which his *Covenant of Grace* hath set us, which when they are fulfilled then *God* is satisfied, thy sins are expiated, and thou art pardoned: And so in this lower sense these are thy *Satisfactions* with which *God* is well pleased.

And thus these self Afflictions of the Sinner supply *Gods* Indignation and divert it; *They leave no place nor business for it, and by these short severities upon himself he does make void, he does expunge the Sentence of eternal Torments, saith Tertullian: As thou becomest severe against thy self, so will the Lord abate of his severities, and he will spare, and he will pity thee in that he sees thou wilt not spare thy self.* How can he choose but be appeased towards thee when he shall see thee executing his Sentence even upon thy own self? and punishing his Enemies although they be thy Members? so that by this means thou dost censure thy self into *Gods* Absolutions, afflict thy self into his Pardons, and dost condemn thy self into eternal Life.

Our Church says the same thing; *That in the Primitive Church there was a Godly Discipline; that at the beginning of Lent such Persons as were notorious Sinners, were put to open Penitence, and punished in this World, that their Souls might be saved in the Day of the Lord; and she does wish (if her wishes be of any force and value when her Orders and Constitutions are not) that Discipline could be restored.* But this I shall not press; if all those whom the Primitive Church Condemned, or *S. Paul* sentenced were so used, if every Schismatick that lies tearing himself and others off from the *Lords* Body were rejected, and if the Fornicator that joyns himself to his unclean Accomplish were disjoined from Christ, and not suffered to make *his members be the members of an Harlot*; if every scandalous debauching Offender that lies corrupting Christs Body, spreading Contagion, thrusting the Gangreen forward, were cut off, and these and all the rest delivered up to Satan, alas what part would Christ have left of his own Body? *Sed illos defendit numerus junctæque umbone phalanges*, and that I fear too in more senses than the Poet means. Therefore I shall not urge the Churches Wish, but onely see whether the Statute in the Text says any thing to this, and whether the *for ever* do reach us: Which is my Third and last Enquiry.

Thirdly, Divers of the *Jews* Rites are said to be, and be prescribed *for ever*, although those very Rites and the whole œconomy of their Covenant were to be chang'd and cease; among other Reasons, as the *Fathers* say, because they foreshadow and point at things in the new Covenant, which were to last till Covenants and Rites shall be no more, and so their meaning and signification was to be for ever.

Now truly that their Expiation Performances, those which I am upon, did so, the whole Epistle to the *Hebrews* is employ'd to prove; the Margin of your Bibles in this Chapter so refer you to the places, that I shall not need to make it out. Christ did fulfill the Temple and the Altar part, yea and the refuse outcast part of the Atonement satisfied the Religion and the contempt of that days Offices, He was the whole true Expiation.

Now

Now does this Expiation as theirs did, require afflicting of the Soul in its attendance, or was that but a Ceremony of their Rite? and though a Jew must mourn and Fast to see his sin killing a Beast, and when he does behold his wickedness eating up a Goat for a Sin-offering, he must deny himself his daily bread, and suffer thirst if his Iniquities drink but the blood of Bullocks; yet when we behold ours embrew themselves in the Blood of the Son of God, not onely lay hands and Confessions on his Head, but drive Thorns into it, make him cry out, almost despair and Die; we need not be concern'd so much as to do ought of that either in order to the better Celebration of that Expiation, or on the very day of it.

Indeed if we consider most mens practices, it would appear most probable that if we were to expiate our sins as the Jews did by sacrificing of our Flocks not of our Jesus, those satisfactions would more afflict our Souls, and more restrain our Vices than that which was made for us by the Death of Christ, and how can this be rectified, unless by some severities upon our selves, we give our selves a piercing sense of what our sin deserves, and grateful apprehensions of what our Surety suffer'd for us? When in sad private earnest I have thought fit to Afflict my Soul with some austere mortifications, and when my fainting Spirits are scarce able to sustain my Body that sinks under the load of it self, then I may have some tender apprehensions of that weight that sunk the Son of God, and 'twas my weight that he fell under. But he that cannot think fit to revenge a year of follies and of Vices with a few weeks severer life, sure thinks his Saviour suffered much in vain; *quorsum perditio hæc?* why must the Blood of God be paid for sin, when I cannot afford a little self-denial for it? Why such great Agonies of the Holy Jesus, when I cannot find in my heart to bear a little strictness for it?

But I could easily deduce (were I not to suppose it done before) that sure as if the Church had thought a Statute had annext these two for ever, they have been joyn'd from the beginnings of our Christianity; it was the Fast that did attend our Saviours sufferings that in part caused the Contest about Easter, which Polycarpe S. John's Disciple manag'd; and then there was a Fast so soon: and he that tells us this, *Irenæus*, Scholar to that Polycarpe, says some observ'd it many days, some forty days also, if we can take the Antient *Ruffinus's* authority but for a Comma. And if the Antient Fathers do expound aright, Christ himself thought that men were interested so much in his Death, that they would Fast by reason of it; *When the Bridegroom is taken from them, then shall they Fast in those days*: Upon which words they say the Season was determin'd to this Duty by the Gospel.

By Dr. Gunning's Paschal or Lent Fast.

But they may say so, who knew how to persuade men to take up restraints of strictest discipline and of severest Piety. But we cannot engage them into Order or from Scandal; they made them fast, we cannot make them temperate. Blessed Saviour! what kind of Christians didst thou hope for thy Disciples, of whom thou wer't so confident they would so concern themselves in thy Passion as to Fast because of it? when in our times Christians will not be kept from their Excesses by it? not in those days of Fasting which thy Primitive followers did Celebrate with abstinencies, that did almost mortifie indeed and slay the Body of Flesh

Flesh as well as Sin, and we in imitation of them, in answer of thy confidences, will not abate a *Meal*, nor an *intemperance*, will eat and *Rice* too, and make a *Lent of Bacchanals*: Thus we prepare load for thy Day of *Passion*, sin on to add weight to thy Cross, and yet we our selves will not be humbled under them. It is in vain to tell men thou expectest they should mortifie, that it will spirit their Repentance, for they will have no kind of Penitence for sin, but such as will let them return to sin again, suffer no discipline with which their Vices too cannot consist, for they can scarce live if they make not themselves chearful with them, even in this time of Sadness, and in sight of the Memorial of thy sufferings for them.

Indeed when I consider how this Season is hedg'd in from Vice by all Gods Indignation, *threatned at first, suffered at last*, pronounc'd in *Commination*, executed in *Passion*: *Ashwednesday* gave us all Gods Curses against Sinners, all which *Good Friday* shews inflicted on our Saviour. Thus we began, *Cursed are the Unmerciful, the Fornicators, and Adulterers, the Covetous persons, Worshippers of Images, Slanders, Drunkards and Extortioners*; and we shall see the Son of God made this Curse for them; yea we our selves said *Amen* to all, as testifying that that Curse is due to all. When I consider this I say, I cannot choose but be astonish'd to behold how men can break through all Gods Curses and *their own* to get at Vice, first seal Gods Maledictions, then provoke and incur them instantly, as if they lov'd and would commit a Rape upon Perdition; as if because men have so long in *Oaths beg'd God to damn them*, and he hath not done it yet, they would now do it in their *Prayers* too; make their *Devotions* as well as *Imprecations* consign them to the wrath of God. He that does *love cursing* thus in the *passive sense*, surely as David says, *it shall come unto him, it shall be unto him as the Garment that covereth him, it shall enter into his bowels like Water, and like Oyl into his Bones, Psal. Cix. 17, 18, 19.* And truly amongst those things which we did Curse, there are that will fulfill all that most literally; the Riots of thy gaudy bravery that make thee gripe, extort, spend thy own Wealth and other mens, undo thy self and Creditors, be fordid and in Debt, meerly to furnish trappings to dress thy self for others eyes and, may be, sins; these bring a Curse to cover thee as does thy Garment, yea and they gird it to thee. The draughts of thy Intemperance carry the malediction down into the Bowels like Water, yea like the Wine into the very Spirits: There is another of them too that will convey the Curse like Oil into the Bones, till it eat out the marrow, and leave nothing but it self to dwell within them, yea till it putrefie the Bones, till it prevent the Grave and Judgment too, while the living Sinner invades the rottenness of the one, and torments of the other; and then the *Lents* and *abstinencies* that the *sin* prescribes shall be observed exactly, onely to qualifie them for more sin and condemnation, may be, at the best but to recover them from what it hath inflicted; when yet alas! they are too soft and tender, the Lord knows, to endure any severities to work out their Repentance and Atonement: and yet sure these the Sinner does go through have nothing to commend them which these others do not much more abound with. If those are not grievous to thee because they are so wholesom, and though it be a miserable thing to go through all their painful squalid methods, yet,
how

how disgustful soever, by the benefit of their Cure they excuse their offensiveness, and ingratiate the present injury they do the Flesh, by the succeeding health they help thee to, and by the Death they do secure thee from: Why sure (to omit, that the other have all these advantages, none have so calm and so establish'd health as the abstemious and continent, and their mind is still serene, their temper never clouded, but besides this) the Christians bitter Potions do purge away that sickness that would end in Death eternal, his *fastings* starve that *worm* that otherwise would gnaw the Soul immortally; his *weepings* quench the *everlasting burnings*, yea there is chearful Pleasure in the midst of these severities, when God breaks in in Comforts into them: *The Glory of the Lord* appears in *that Cloud* too that is upon the penitent sad heart; when he is drench'd in *tears* the *Holy Ghost the Comforter* does *move upon those waters*, and breaths Life and Salvation into them; and he who is the *Unction* pours *Oil* into those *wounds of the Spirit*; and we are never nearer Heaven than when we are thus prostrate in the lowest dust, and when our Belly cleaveth unto the ground in humble penitence, then we are at the very Throne of Grace: And this our light *afflicting of the Soul* which is but for a moment, does work for us a far more exceeding weight of Glory. To which, &c.

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The

The Fourth
SERMON,
 Preached at
WHITE-HALL.

October. 12. 1662.

JOHN XV. 14.

Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I Command you.



HE words are a conditional Assertion of *Christ's* concerning his *Apostles*, and in them *all Christians*: And they do easily divide themselves into two parts. The

First is a *positive* part, wherein there is a state of great and Blessed advantage, which they are declared to be in present possession of: In these words, *Ye are my Friends.*

In which there are *two* things that make up that advantage, 1. A Relation, 2. The Person related to. *Friends*, and *My Friends*. The

Second is a *Conditional* part, wherein there are the *terms*, upon which that Possession is made over, and which preserve the Right and Title to them: in these words, *If ye do whatsoever I command you*: in which there are *two* things required as *Conditions*.

I. Obedience, *If ye do what I command you.*

II. That Obedience Universal; *If ye do whatsoever I command you.*

The first thing that offers it self to our consideration, is the Relation, *Friends*.

It is a known common-place Truth, that a Friend is the most useful thing that is in whatsoever state we are: It is the Soul of life, and of content. If I be in prosperity: We know abundance not enjoy'd, is but like *Jewels* in the *Cabinet*, useless while they are there: It is indeed nothing but the *opinion of Prosperity*. But 'tis not possible to en-

joy abundance otherwise than by *communicating* it: a man *possesseth* plenty onely in his *Friends*, and hath *fruition* of it meerly by *bestowing* it. If I be in *adversity*; to have a person whom I may intrust a trouble to, whose bosom is as open and as faithful to me, as 'tis to his own thoughts, to which I may commit a swelling secret; this is in a good measure to *unlade*, and to *pour out* my sorrow from me; thus I divide my grievances which would be insupportable, if I did not disburthen my self of some part of them: Now there is no bosom so safe as that where *friendship* lodges; take Gods Opinion in the case, *Deut. xiii. 6. If thy Brother the Son of thy Mother, or thy Son, or thy Daughter, or the Wife of thy bosom, or thy Friend that is as thine own Soul.* This is the highest step in the Gradation; And there is all the reason in the World; for though *Parent* and *Child* are as near one to other as any thing can be to part of it self; *Husband* and *Wife* are but two different names of the same one, yet these may become bitter and unkind: A *Parent* may grow *cross*, or a *Child* *refractory*, a *Mother* may be like the *Ostrich* in the *Wilderness*, throw off her *bowels* with her *burthen*; and an ungracious Son is *constant pangs* and *travail* to his *Mother*, his whole life gives her *after-throws* which are most deadly: Dislikes also may rest within the *Marriage-Bed*, and lay their heads upon two wedded *Pillows*; but none of these unkindnesses can untie the Relation; that ends not where the bitterness begins, he is a *Parent* still though froward, and a *Child* though stubborn; but a *true Friend* can be nothing but *kind*; it does include a *dearness* in its essence, which is so inseparable from it, that they begin and end together: A man may be an *Husband* without *loving*, but cannot be a *lover*, that is a *Friend*, without *loving*.

And sure to have no one *Friend* in this Life, no one that is concerned in any of my interests or me my self, none that hath any cares or so much as good wishes for me, is a state of a most uncomfortable prospect. The *Plague* that keeps *Friends* at a distance from me while I live out of the sphere of my infection, and after gives me *Death*, hath yet less of *Malignity* than this; that leaves me the *Compassions*, the *Prayers*, all the solitary *Comforts*, all indeed but the outward entertainments of my *Friends*; that, though it shut the *Door* against all company, yet, puts a *Lord have Mercy* on the *Door*: But this I now described hath none of that, hath no good wishes, nothing else but hate, is worse than a *perpetual Pestilence*.

Yet neither is this state so comfortless, in respect of this life, as not to have a *Friend* in the concerns of the Life to come; none that hath so much kindness for my *Soul* as every man hath for his *Enemies Beast*, which if he see fallen in a *Ditch* he will at least give notice that it may be help'd out thence: No one, that when a sin, like to that *Falling sickness* in the Gospel (and it is such indeed without a Parable) is *casting me into the water*, quenching my parts, my Reason, and the *Immortal spark* within me; or *throwing me into the Fire*, raising *Lascivious heats* within, which after will break out into *Hell fires*; none yet that will stretch out his hand to catch me, or to pull me out: None that does care to see me perish to *Eternity*, or that values my *Soul*, which yet did cost the *Blood of God*, at a word speaking: This is to be like *Dives* in the *Flames*, to whom they would not lend the *help of the tip of a finger*, or give the kindness of a *drop of Water*: I am as it were

on the other side the *Gulf* already, Here is the use of Friendship, the only noble one, that's worthy of that blessed quality: When I have one that will be an *assistant Conscience* to me, who, when that within me sleeps, or is *benumbed*, will watch over my actions; will *testify* them to my Face, will be as faithful to me as the *Conscience* should be, hold a Glasse to my Soul, shew me the stains and the proud tumours, the foul Ulcers that are there, and then will fret, and rub, or prick, lance, and corrode, to cure those Tumours, and do off those spots, such an one is a *familiar Angel Guardian*, is truly of that blessed Heavenly rank, and onely less than the *Friend* in the Text, the *Person* related to, and my next Part.

My Friends. There are three things from which men use to take the measures of a *Friend*.

First, From the good things he bestows on them: He that thinks to keep friendship alive onely with Air, that gives good words, but parts with nothing, that entertains onely with Garbs and Civilities, is but the *pageant* of a Friend: They that own having but *one Soul*, and seem to clasp as if they would have but *one Body* too, cannot keep such *distinct* and *separate proprieties* in other little things, as not to have communication one from the other. And,

Secondly, The *friendship* of these benefits is rated by the measures of our *need* of them. When *Midas* was ready to die for hunger, his God was kinder to him in a little bread, than in making all that he touch'd turn into Gold: Great things engage but little where there is but little use of them: And all these,

Thirdly, Are endeared by the *Affection* they are given with. Good turns done with design, what need soever I have of them, are *hire*, and not *friendship*; it is the kindness onely that obligeth, the gift without the love does but upbraid and scorn my want.

Now to measure the *Friend* here in the Text, by these, were an impossible undertaking, whose Friendship did exceed all bounds and measures. I shall do no more towards it but read the words before my Text, which were the occasion of it, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his Friends*, and then it follows, *Ye are my Friends*. The token therefore of his Friendship, the gift he gave them was his *life*, rather that was the least he gave: He gave his *glory* first, that so he might be qualified to give his life, for *ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωκε* *Phil. ii. 7.* He lessened himself from the condition of being Lord of all, into that of a Servant, *ὑπαταλόμενος*, *Heb. ii. 9.* being *diminished*, made *lower*, *meaner* than his Creatures for the suffering of Death. Now with the price of such Divine essential glory to buy onely a life, rather onely a possibility of Death, that after he might give that life for us, and with his Death purchase us an immortal life, is such a gift as no *Romance* of friendship ever fancied or did aim at: We may have heard of two Companions that would die for one another, that never quarrelled in their lives, but for this, who should suffer first to save the other, and strave onely for Execution: But for a Person of the *Trinity* to leave his Heaven to come down to us; to dwell with Agonies that he might be at one with us: and be tyed to the Cross, that he might be united to us; this is a friendship fit for *Ecstasies* of apprehension. Of all the things that court thy kindness here below, that spread snares, and lay baits for thy

thy friendship, if any bid so fair, so temptingly, if any will give such a price, in Gods name let it have thy love, I shall not blame him that engageth his Affection there: But sure *Heaven* cannot give a greater gift than this; for what can God give greater than himself? Yea I may say God could not give so much, for he must be *Man* too, to give his *life*, and this, saith he, *he gave for his Friends*, even in our stead, who must have perish'd else eternally, which intimates the second thing, the *need* we had of this.

A need great as the gift, necessity invincible, that could break into Heaven, rattle the *Trinity* to serve it self, throw Death into those Regions of Immortality, and which would not be satisfied but with the *Blood of God*.

And now is not the kindness and the condescension of Friendship in his expressions too, when he saith, *greater love than this hath no man*: which was the third Endearment.

There never were such wounds of Love as those that tore this Heart; never such meltings of Affection as dissolv'd this Lover into *sweats of Blood*. There was no motive to all this, but his meer love: For all this he designed to us *before we were*, and therefore sure *before we were deserving*: And O our God! thou that from all Eternity didst lay Contrivances to give thy Life for us, so to redeem, and then to glorifie us; what were we then that thou shouldst do this for us? what were we then when we were not? and yet that thou from the Abyss of Everlastingness, shouldst think thoughts of such kindness to us, and such blessedness for us, who then *were not*, and *deserved nothing*; and who since we were, *have deserved nothing but Damnation*.

And as there was no other motive to all this design but *love*, so neither was there any thing but *love* in the fulfilling. Look on your Saviour in the Garden, and upon Mount Calvary, and you shall find him there in as great Agonies of Affection as Torment, and hanging down his head upon the Cross with languishments of *kindness* more than *weakness*. His Arms stretched out and rack'd, as if on purpose to the posture of *receiving you to his embraces*, and his side opened not onely to *shed Blood* for you, but to make you a *passage to his very Heart*. Look on him offering up his Tears, his Prayers, and his Soul for Sin, and in the midst of all, projecting happiness to you, as it were praying, O my Father, here I charge my self with all the guilt of those my Friends, I thy onely Son God, one with thee, am content to suffer Torments that they all may be acquitted; Here I lay down my Life that they may have eternal Life, let me be Crucified, so they be Glorified. Which was the purchase and the gift of this his Passion to all his *Friends*, even to those *that do what he Commands*; which is the first Condition that entitles to his friendship, and my next Part.

Ye are my Friends if ye do what I command you.

I shall not urge, that Great men upon Earth will not take any to their Friendship but upon these terms; nor will I plead the reasonableness of this in *Christ*, there being no cause why he should be a Friend to any that will daily disoblige him and dishonour him: Nor will I press the whole Oeconomy of Scripture, which says, all the advantages Christ ever gave or meant us, and all the acts of Friendship that he ever did for us were with this design. He gave his grace that brings salvation

to save us into an estate of sober Vertue. *Tit. ii. ver. 11, 12.* He gave himself also to Ransom us from our own evil doings, and to redeem us into his Obedience, *Tit. ii. ver. 14.* Without which no dependance on him will avail. *Matth. vii. 21.* He will own no acquaintance with, nor services from them who have friendship with sin; though they have cast out Devils in his Name, if they retain their Vices; though they do Miracles, if they do wickedly; he will bid them depart, profess he never knew them, *ver. 22, 23.* He will not let such have a bare relation to his Name, nor have the friendship of a Title, *2 Tim. ii. 19.* All his Rewards also that he will give are promised to none other, but them that do what he commands, *Apec. xxii. 14.* that is, do Evangelically, heartily and faithfully endeavour it, and do this with all diligence exprest by words, that import all strife imaginable, as Running, Wrestling, Fighting, Warring. And persevere also by patient continuance in well-doing, *Rom. ii. 7.* and he hath nothing else but Vengeance for all others, *2 Thes. i. 8.* and we have neither Christ, nor Gospel, nor Religion, but with these terms.

But I shall wave all this, and bound my self within the present words, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his Life for his Friends. Ye are my Friends if ye do what I command you. When Christ is boasting of his love, making comparisons, and vying friendships with mankind, nay more, contriving heights and depths of Mercy, such as Man hath no comprehension, nor fathom for; when he was preparing to do an act of compassion almost equal to his Divinity, when he had resolutions of so much kindness as to give his life that he might shew kindness. Yet could he not then find in his heart to offer or declare one jot of kindness to the men that will not do what he commands, but in the midst of such Agonies of compassion, he thought of nothing but infinite indignation and eternal vengeance to the disobedient. I have but now given my Body and my Blood even to the Traitor Judas, to one who is a Devil: I am going to give my life even for my Enemies, for the World: But I will give no love to any, have no friendship with any but the virtuous: no, though they be my own Disciples, ye are my Friends, ye my Companions and Apostles are my Friends, onely on this condition, if ye do what I command you.

*Luc. xxii. 19,
20, 21.
John vi. 70.
Rom. v. 10.
John iii. 16, 17,
& 6, 51. &
2 Cor. v. 19.*

And then is it not matter of Astonishment, to see men fancy they have a right in all Christ's Actions and Sufferings, presume upon his favour and their own happy condition, though they do nothing, or but very little towards this, and the main of their life be disobedience, as if all Christ's Commands, appointed them to do no commands, and Christianity were but a liberty from virtue? To pass by those that do nothing but Evil, that which the Devil does suggest, or their flesh dictate, and to consider the Demurer sort of Christians, that pretend a respect to Christ, and to Religion, and see what they will do.

Why sometimes you may find them troubled at their Vices and themselves; and those troubles breath out in Sighs, and in warm wishes that they could do that which Christ prescribes; to will is sometimes strongly present with them, but to perform they know not how. Alas Christ does not tell you that you are his Friends, if you wish well to him, and his Commands, but he requires that you shall do them. These are but vapours of a troubled Soul, which howsoever they may chance

rise

rise warm, catch a strong suddain heat, breath up in flashing thoughts. They are but *Meteors*, little shooting flames that onely do catch fire and fall and die; shew fair, but they warm nothing: And so these thoughts do never heat the Heart into *Devotions* and *holy resolutions*, the fire is not strong nor does it live enough, to melt and work away the filthinesses of the Soul: No, though they grow to *aversations*; For you may find such men, when wearied with the pursuit of their sins, *hating* their customs, and the engagements to the practice of them; complaining thus, *I know 'tis ill, and 'tis against my heart, that I obey the motions of my passions or Lusts: The incitations of my Appetite, the usance of the World, the Obligations of Civility or mistaken honour do indeed prevail upon me, but 'tis with great reluctancy of mind that I yield to them, but I cannot avoid it.* There are not few that satisfie themselves with this condition. Now sure Christ does not say, *I cannot be my Friends* except you *sin against me and against your Knowledg, and your Consciences too.* 'Tis strange that men should think the Heathen influence of a Witch that cryed,

—— *Video meliora, proboque,
Deteriora sequor* ——

I know, and do approve of better things, but cannot choose but follow these that are the worser) strange, that this *Fury* that had the *Devil for Familiar*, should make *Christ a friend*; that this should be the state of *Gospel Saints*, and of *Gods favourites*. 'Tis possible some therefore go yet further to good purposes towards *Obedience*, and have *holy Intentions*, but this is not sufficient neither, if to do his Commands be necessary: for to purpose and intend to do them, is not certainly to do them. Yet where are any that do aim at doing any more? and there is none of these but does presume upon his interest in Christ, and satisfies himself and is secure.

Yet is it hard to find a ground of this their confidence, unless it rise from the unhappy use they make of Gods *preserving Mercies*, and his kindness to them in the concernments of this life. They see without their cares, and upon very weak intreaties indeed, against all provocations both of God and danger; yet his protections secure them, although they neither mind the asking them, nor mind the walking worthy of them. The man whose Sins, not Prayers, prepare him for his Bed, he sleeps well: perhaps more soundly than he who at his Bedside throws himself on his face into Gods Arms, and there bequeaths himself to the Securities of the Almighty: And he, whose Sleeps onely refresh him for returns to Sin, does often live as long, as safely, and as merrily, as he that daily most Religiously does beg Protections from above. And others that afford the Lord some *little homages*, themselves some *Prayers* when their pleasures or occasions permit, God hath a care of them, and their *desires* flow into them, all does succeed well with them. Now they take confidence hence to conclude, these are the Tokens of Gods *friendship*, and all his mercies will come in at the like easie rates; that such a *short Petition* as committed them to the refreshments of the *night*, and after which they wak'd into renewed strengths and pleasures, *such another* shall lay them down in safety, to the sleeps of that
long

long night, that afterwards will break in *happy Resurrection*: For why? God will not sure fail his own mercies, but be as friendly to their Souls as he is to their Bodies.

And thus God's Preservations here, in meer defiance of our provocations, which are the *arts of his long-suffering*, his *strivings of Compassion*, meerly to give us opportunities of being reconciled to him, and to *invite* us to be so, while we make them occasions of carelessness and security, they are so far from being pledges of his *Friendship*, that they have all the aggravations of affronted goodness, become *Temptations* and degrees of Ruin. 'Twere fine indeed if Christ's eternal preparations for his Friends, would come in to us, without care or doing any thing, as an accession to our pleasures; if when we had lived many years as in a *Garden*, our days all *flower'd* with delight; we might expire into *Paradise*, and in soft *Airs of Musick* breath into *Hallelujah's*. But alas! the smooth *easy* way leads *down the Hill*, and he must strive and *pant* that will get *up* into the Mansions and the Bosom of his Saviour, and whosoever will be *his Friend*, must *do what he commands*.

But is there nothing less indeed will qualify? The Scripture saith, *that Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for Righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God*, James ii. 23. and then, is Christ more inaccessible, and harder to be made a *Friend*?

Why, truly *God and Christ* both are so much *Friends* to all true *Believers*, that the Life of Christ was given for them; for, *God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*, John iii. 16. Nor are there any qualities more signally peculiar to *friendship*, more engaging than confidence and trust, dependance and relying, embosoming my self in him: Now these are but the exercise of Faith; and 'tis most certain if we heartily endeavour to do what he commands, there is employment then for all this work of *Faith*, place for its applications and assurances. My Text does make this good. But when his friendship is made over on Conditions, as 'tis not onely in these words, but every where in Scripture; (there being not one Promise absolute that does concern *Gods favour, justification, and eternal Life*: he does not once offer Remission of sins, but to those that amend their Lives; nay, does expresse as if he could not give it otherwise, *peradventure they will repent that I may forgive them*, Jer. xxxvi. 3.) The Promises therefore being conditional, Faith must be answerable to the Promises that it does rest on and apply; and at the most, can be but *an assurance that you shall be partaker of what's promised*, that is to say, partaker of the *favour and the life of Christ, if ye do his Commands*. But then if I perform not this Condition, to trust upon his friendship which I am not qualified for; to think by Faith to receive a Pardon, which in that case I am, was never offered me; to apply to my self Promises which were never made me, for none were ever made to them that do *not do*: and to assure my self Christ will transgress his everlasting Covenant for my Vices sake, meerly to give me leave to enjoy my sins; will do that which *God may not do, forgive one that will not repent*: If I believe thus against Promise, and against Decree, am confident whether Christ *will or no*, and will rely upon him in *despite of him*, if such a faith will make us friends, affronts do reconcile. This is indeed *to lay violent hands on his favour*,

and to invade his friendship, and without Metaphor, take Heaven by force.

But sure I am, that this is not the Faith made *Abraham* be called the friend of God in that place of *S. James*, but a Faith that was perfected by doing, ver. 22. of that Chapter, a Faith that made him offer up his only Son upon the Altar, ver. 21. 'Tis true, he did in hope believe against all hope, *Rom. iv. 18.* So that his faith was stronger than a contradiction, but yet his resolutions of obedience seem stronger than his faith; for he did that even to the cutting off the grounds of all his faith, and hope. He trusted God would make his Promise good to him, make all the Nations of the Earth be blessed in the seed of *Isaac*; though *Isaac* had no seed, nor could have, if he should be slain: And he resolved at Gods command himself to slay that *Isaac*; so to make him have no seed. His Faith indeed did not dispute the great impossibility; but his obedience caused it. He did not question, how can God perform with me when I have offered up my Son? I cannot look that a large Progeny should rise out of the Ashes on the Altar; nor will those Flames that devour all my Seed at once, make my seed numerous, lasting and glorious as the Stars in Heaven, which he promised me: But much less did he question, why should I obey in this? He that does his Commands, can but expect what he hath promised; but if I should do this Command and slay my Son, I make his Promise void, and destroy my own expectations: And if I disobey I can but suffer what he bids me do; my own obedience will execute all that his Indignation would threaten to my disobedience. Though *Abraham* had three days time and journey to the Altar, that Nature might have leisure the mean while to reason with the Precept thus, and his Affection might struggle with his Duty; yet he goes on, resolves to tear out his own Bowels, and cut off his hopes, will Sacrifice his only Son, and Sacrifice Gods Promises to his Commands.

Gen. xv. 5.

Gen. xxii. 4.

And then, he that will trust to *Abraham's* example of believing, yet will not follow him at all in doing, will obey no Commands; that is so far from offering up an only Son, he will not slay an only evil Custom, nor part with one out of the herd of all his vicious Habits; will not give up the satisfaction to any of his carnal, worldly, or ambitious appetites; not sacrifice a Passion or a lust to all the Obligations that God and Christ can urge him with, he hath, nor faith, nor friendship, no, nor forehead. 'Tis true indeed, he that hath *Abraham's* faith may well assure himself he is *Christ's* Friend; but 'tis only on this account, because he that believes as *Abraham* believed, he will not stick to do whatever Christ commands; which is that universality of obedience, that is the next condition that entitles to Christ's friendship, and my last Part.

Ye are my Friends if ye do whatsoever I Command you.

There is no quality so necessary to a Friend, or so appropriate to friendship, as sincerity. They that have but one Soul, they can have no reserves from one another: But disobedience to one Precept, is inconsistent with sincerity, that hath respect unto all the Commandments; and he that will not do whatever Christ prescribes, hath reserves of affection for some darling sin, and is false to his Saviour. He is an Enemy indeed, so that there is no friendship on either side. *S. Paul* says so of

of any of one kind; *the minding of the flesh*, saith he, whether it be providing for the Belly, or any other of the Organs of Carnality, is *desperate, incurable Rebellion*: Now such a Rebel, is, we know, the worst of Enemies. S. James does say as much of any of those vicious affections that are set on the World: *Whosoever will be a friend of the World, is an Enemy of God*, James iv. 4. And he calls them *Adulteresses* and *Adulterers*, who think to joyn great strict Religion to some little by-love of an Honour, or a profit of this World. Such Men are like a Wife, that not contented with the partner of her Bed, takes in another now and then, she must not count her self her Husbands Friend, though she give him the greatest share in her affections; no, she is but a *bosom Enemy*: And so any one Vice allowed is a *paramour sin*, is whoredom against Christ, and our pretended friendship to him in all other *obediences*, is but the *kindness* and the *caresses* of an *Adulteress*, the meer hypocrisy and treachery of love. If it be necessary to the gaining Christ's *friendship*, that thou *do his Commands*, 'tis necessary that thou *do them all*, that thou divorce thy self from thy beloved sin, as well as any other: Because his Friendship does no more require other obedience than it does that, but is as inconsistent with thy own peculiar Vice as with the rest. Indeed it is impossible that it should bear with any, they being all his murderers. If thou canst find one sin that had no hand in putting Christ to Death, *one* Vice that did not come into the garden, nor upon Mount Calvary, that did not help to *assassin* thy Saviour, even take thy fill of *that*: But if each had a stab at him, if *no one* of thy Vices could have been *forgiven*, had not thy *Jesus died* for it, canst thou expect he should have kindness for his Agony, or friendship for the man that entertains his *Crucifiers* in his heart? If *worldly cares* which he calls *Thorns*, fill thy head with Contrivances of Wealth and Greatness, of filling Coffers, and of plating Coronets for thee, as the *thorns* did make him a *Crown* too, wouldst thou have him receive thee and these in his bosom, to gore his Heart as they did pierce his Head? If thou delight in that intemperance, which filled his deadly *Cup*, which Vomited *Gall* into it, can he delight in thee? That *Cup* which made him fall upon his face to deprecate, will he partake in as the pledge of mutual love? He that sunk under, could not bear this *load* of thine, when it was in his *Cross* upon his *shoulders*, will he bear it and thee in his Arms, when thou fallest under it? When thou wilt cast a *shameful spewing on his glory* too, if he own such a Friend? Thou that art so familiar with his Name, as thou wert more his Friend than any in the World, whose Oaths and imprecations, *Moses* says, *strike through that Name*, which they so often call upon, thou mayst as well think his Heart did attract the Spear that pierced it, and the Wound close upon its head with Unions of Love, as that he hath kindness for thee. If Christ may make Friendship with him, that does allow himself a sin, he may have *fellowship with Belial*: For him to dwell in any heart that cherisheth a Vice, were to *descend to Hell* again. But as far as those Regions of Darkness are from his Habitation of Glory, and the Black Spirits of that place from being any of his Guard of holy Myriads; so far is he from *dwelling with*, or being *friend* to him, that is a friend to any wickedness, to him that *will not do whatever he commands*.

Rom. viii. 7.

Matth. xiii. 22.

Matth. xxvii.
29.Matth. xxvi.
38, 39.Levit. xxiv. 16.
וְיָקַם שָׁמָיִם

And now if these Conditions seem *hard*, if any do not care to be his Friend upon these terms, they may betake themselves to others. Let such make themselves friends of the *Mammon of unrighteousness*: A Friend indeed that hath not so much of the *insincerities* as many great ones have: For this will furnish them with all that *heart* or *lust* can wish for, all that *necessity* or *wantonness* proposeth to it self to dreis out *pomp* or *Vice*: But yet when with enjoyment the affections grow, and become so unquiet, work them so, as not to let their thoughts or actions rest, make them quicken themselves, and like the motions of all things that go downwards tending to the Earth, increase by the continuance, grow stronger, and more violent towards the end, then when they are most passionate, it fails them: And having filled their life with most unsatisfied tormenting cares, it leaves them *nothing* but the *guilt of all*: When their great Wealth shall shrink into a *jingle sheet*, no more of it be left, but a thin shroud, and all their vast Inheritances but *six foot* of Earth, be gone, yet the *iniquity of all* will stick close to them; and this false Friend, that does it Self forsake them, will neither *go along*, nor will let its *pomp* follow them, raises a cry on them as high as *Gods Tribunal*; the cry of all the *Blood*, all the *oppressed rights* that bribery till then had stifled, the groans of all those *Poor* that *greatness*, *covetousness*, or *extortion* had ground or crush'd; the yellings of those *Souls* that were *starv'd* for want of the Bread of life, which yet they payed for, and the price of it made those heaps which will that day appear against their *Friends* and *Masters*, and prove their *Adversaries to eternal Death*.

Psal. xlix. 17.

Let others joy in Friends that Wine does get them; such as have no qualification to endear them, but this, that they will not refuse to sin and to be sick with their Companions: Men that do onely drink in their affections, as full of *friendship* as of *liquor*, and probably they do unload themselves of *both at once*, part with their *deariness* and their *drink together* and alike. I know not whether it be heats of mutual kindness that inflame these draughts, and the desires of them, so as if they did drink thirst; but sure I am, that these *hot draughts* begin the *Lake of fire*.

Prov. vii. 27.

Prov. ii. 19.

Let others please themselves in an affection that *Carnality* cements. These are warm friendships I confess, but *Solomon* will tell us *whence* they have their *heat*. Her house, saith he, *doth open into Hell*, and *Brimstone* kindles those libidinous flames. There are *strait bands*, *fetters* in those affections indeed; for the same Wiseman says, *The Closets of that sinner are the Chambers of Death: That none that go unto her return again, or take hold of the paths of life*; it seems she is a friend that takes most *irreversible dead hold*, she is not onely as *insatiate*, but as *inexorable* as the *Grave*, and the *Eternal Chains of Fate* are in those her *Embraces*. But God keep us from making such strict *Covenants with Death*; from being at *friendship with Hell*; or in a word, that I say all at once, with any that are *good Companions* onely in *sinning*. Such men having no virtue in themselves, must needs hate it in others, as being a reproach to them, and therefore they are still besieging it, using all arts and stratagems to undermine it: and having nothing else to recommend them in mens affections, but their *managery of Vice*, no way to Merit but by serving *iniquity*, they not onely comply

comply with our own evil Inclinations, that so they may be grateful, and insinuate into us, but they provoke too and inflame those tendencies that they may be more useful to us, having no other means to work their ends. And then such friends by the same reason, must be *false* and *treacherous*, and all that we declaim at, and abhor in Enemies, when that shall be the way to serve their ends; because they have no Virtue to engage them to be otherwise: And to be such, is to be constant to their own designs, their dispositions and usances. These are the *Pests* of all Societies, they speak and live *infection*, and friendship with them is to couple with the *Plague*. These do *complete* and *perfect* what the Devil but *began* in *Eden*: Nurse up *Original sin*, chase inclination into appetite and habit, suggest and raise desires, and then feed them into Constitution and Nature: In a word, are a *brood* of those *Serpents*, one of which was enough to destroy Paradise and Innocence. 'Tis true, a man would think these were our Friends indeed, that venture to *Gehenna* for us: Alas they are but more *familiar Devils*, work under Satan to bring us to Torments, and differ nothing from him, but that they draw us into them, and he inflicts them. And when sinful contents come home in Ruine, and pleasures die into Damnation; then men will understand these treacherous loves, and find such Friends are but *projectours* for the Devil; then they will hate them as they do their own Damnation, discerning these are but the kindnesses of Hell. Nay it is possible, I may slander that place in speaking so ill of it. *Dives* will let us see there are affections of a kinder and more blessed strain in Hell, *Luke xvi.* from the twenty seventh Verse; you find he did make truce with Torments, that he might contrive and beg onely a message of Repentance for his Brethren; he did not mind at all his own dire Agonies, he minded so the reformation of his Friends. Good God! when I reflect upon these *pieties* of the Damn'd, together with the practices of those who have given their names in to *Religion*, when I see Fiends in Hell do study how to make Men *virtuous*, and *Christians* upon Earth with all their art debauch them into *vice* and ruine; I cannot choose but pray, *Grant me such Friends as are in Hell*. Rather grant us all the *Friendship* in the Text. But then, we must have none with any Vice. Friendship with that, engageth into Enmity with *God* and *Christ* I shew'd you. And to pass over all those after-retributions of Vengeance Christ hath studied for his Enemies, when he, that now courts us to be our Friend and we will make our *Adversary*, must be our *Judge*: For were there none of this, and should we look no further than this life; yet sure we of this Nation know, what it is to have God our Enemy; who for so many years lay under such inflictions, as had much of the character of his *last execution*; they had the *Blasphemies* and the *Confusion*, the *dire Guilts*, and the *black Calamities*, and almost the *Despair* and *Irrecoverableness* of those in *Hell*. And though He be at Peace with us at present, at least there is a Truce; yet I beseech you in the presence and the fear of God, to think in earnest, whether the present provocations of this Nation do not *equal* those that twenty years ago engaged him into Arms against us, and made him dash us so in pieces: Whether those Actions of the Clergy be reformed that made the People to abhor their *Function* and their *Service*, the *Offerings* and *Ministers* of the Lord, and made God himself spew them out.

out. 'Twere endless to go on to the *prophaneness*, to the *loose impieties* and the bold *Atheisms* of the *Laitie*, especially of the *better sort*; in short, what one degree, or state or Sex is better? Sure I am, if we are not better, we are worse beyond expression or recovery: who have resisted every method, and conquer'd all God's Arts of doing good upon us, been too hard for his Judgments and his Mercies both.

'Tis true, when we lay gasping under his severe Revenges, we then pretended to be humbled, begg'd to be reconciled and be at peace with him, and vow'd to his Conditions, promising obedience, and aliened our selves from our old sins, his Foes. But then, when Christ came to confirm this Amity, came dress'd with all his Courtship, brought all the invitations of Love along, our *Prince* and our *Religion*, our *Church* and *State*, *Righteousness* and *Peace*, and the *Beauty of Holiness*, every thing that might make us be an Happy and a Pious Nation, thus he did tempt and labour to engage that Friendship which we offered him and vowed to him: And we no sooner seiz'd all this, but we break resolutions as well as duty, to get loose from him; and laden with the spoils of our defeated Saviour's goodness, we joyn hands with his Enemies, resume our old acquaintant-sins, enrich and serve them with his Bounties, make appear that we onely drew him in, to work such Miracles, but to assit our *Worldliness*, *Ambitions* and *Lusts*, to be our opportunities of Vice and provocation of him. And being thus affronted and refused, his Enemy prefer'd, *not this God, but Barrabas*, any the vilest thing for Friend, rather than Christ, must he not needs be more our Enemy than heretofore? And if he be, that question will concern

1 Cor. x. 22.

ver. 17, 19, 20.

Isa. l. 20.

us, *Are we stronger than God?* It should behove us not to fall out with him till we are. See how he does prepare himself for the Encounter, *Wisd. v. Taking his Jealousie for Armour, putting on Justice*, severe and vindicative Justice, *as a Breastplate*; and, *his Wrath sharpening as a Sword*; and, *arming all the Creatures for Auxiliaries*. Alas! when *Omnipotence* does express it self as scarcely strong enough for Execution, but *Almightiness* will be armed also for Vengeance, will assume *Weapons*, call in *Aids* for fury, who shall stand it? Will our Friends, think you, keep it off us, and secure us? did we consider how uneasie God accounts himself, till he begin the Storm, while he keeps off his *Plagues* from overrunning such a Land, we would expect them every moment, and they must come. *Ah*, says he, *I will ease me of mine Adversaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies*; and then in what condition are we, if God can have *no ease* but in our *ruine*, if he does hunger and thirst after it, go to his Vengeance as to a Feast? And if you read the 25th Chapter of *Isaiah*, you will find there a rich Bill of Fare, which his Revenge upon his Enemies does make; view the sixth Verse. He that enjoys his morsels, that lays out his Contrivances, and studies on his Dishes so as if he meant to cram his Soul, let him know what delight soever he finds, when he hath spoiled the Elements of their Inhabitants, to furnish his own Belly, and not content with Natures Delicacies neither, hath given them forc'd Fatnesses, changing the very *flesh* into a *marrow*, suppling the *Bones* almost into that Oyl that they were made to keep; all this delight the Lord by his expressions does seem to take in his dread Executions on his Enemies, a *sinful People*.

And

And if the vicious Friendships of the World have so much more attractive than Christ's love and favour, and the happy consequences of it, as to counterpoise all the danger of such enmity, you may joyn hands with them: But if His be the safer and more advantageous, then hearken to his Propositions and beseechings; for He does beg it of you: As he treated this reconciliation in his *Blood*, so he does in *Petitions* too. For saith S. Paul, *We are Ambassadors for Christ, as if God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, Be you reconciled,* and then be Generous towards your GOD and Saviour; and having brought him as it were upon his knees, reduc'd him to *entreaties*, be friends, and condescend to him and your own *Happiness*. If He be for you, take no care then, *who can be against you*. His Friendship will secure you not onely from your Enemies but from Hostility it self; for, *when a man's ways please the Lord he will make even his Enemies to be at peace with him*, Prov. xvi. 7. He will reconcile all but Vices. And afterwards see what a blessed throng of Friends, we shall be all initiated into, Heb. xii. 23. *To an innumerable company of Angels, to the general Assembly, and Church of the First-born that are written in Heaven, to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of Just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediatour of the new Covenant, &c.* And of this blest *Corona*, we our selves shall be a noble and a glorious part, inflamed all with that mutual love, that kindles *Seraphims*, and that streams out into an heavenly glory, filling that Region of immortal love and blessedness; and being Friends, that is, made one with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that Trinity of Love, we shall enjoy, what we do now desire to ascribe to them, *All Honour, Glory, Power, Majesty, and Dominion, for evermore.*

Amen.

The

The Fifth

SERMON,

Preached at

WHITE-HALL.

Third Wednesday in LENT.

EZECH. XXXIII. 11.

Why will ye Dye?



THE Words are part of a Debate which God had with the sinful House of *Israel*, in which there are *three* things offer themselves to be considered.

First, The Sinners *Fate* and *Choice*: He will *Die*; That's his End, yea, 'tis his Resolution, he *will die*.

Secondly, Gods inquiry for the Ground of this, he seems astonished at the Resolution; and therefore reasons with them about this their so mad choice, and questions *Why will ye dye?* Which words are also,

Thirdly, The debate of his Affections, the reasoning of his Bowels, and a most passionate Expostulation with them on account of that their Resolution, *Why will ye dye?* which as it is address'd by God directly to the House of *Israel*, so it would fit a Nation perverse, as that; which mutinies against Miracles and Mercies, is false to God, Religion, and their own Interests; led by a Spirit of *giddiness* and *frenzy*, unsteddy in all things but resolutions of Ruine, that would tear open their old Wounds, to let out Life, and they will dye. And though the Lord be pleas'd to work new prodigies of mercy for us, and to say unto us in despite of all our Enemies both Foreign and Domestick, *Live*: The use we make of all is onely to debauch the Miracles, and make Gods Mercies help to fill the measure of our Judgments; live as if we would try all the ways to Ruine; and since God will *thus deliver* us from dangers, we would call for them some other way. But to prescribe

to these is above the attempt of my endeavours: May the blessed Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Holiness and Peace, and Order, breath on their Counsels whom this is committed to. I shall bend my Discourse to the Conviction of Sinners in particular, and treat upon the words as if they had been spoke to us under the Gospel.

The first thing which my Text and God supposeth, is the Sinners Fate and Choice: He *will dye*. Even the *second Death*, for it is appointed for all men once to dye, and then cometh the Judgment which shall sentence him to another death that is immortal, in which he and his misery must live for ever; that is, he must die everlastingly: Such is first his *Fate*.

James i. 15.

2 Thess. xi. 3.

Matth. xxv.

41, 46.

Mark ix. 43,

44.

Rev. xiv. 10,

11.

That *Sin* and *Death* are of so near, so complicated a relation, as that though they were Twins, the birth and Issue of one Womb and moment, yet they are also one anothers Off-spring, and beget each other, while *Sin bringeth forth Death*, as S. James saith, and is the Parent of Perdition, and yet the *Man of Sin* is the *Son of Perdition*, as S. Paul saith, and Iniquity is but destruction's birth, onely itself derived. And that this Death and Perdition is Eternal in the most sad sense of the word there are a thousand Texts that say. This is the Message of God in the mouth and Blood of his Son, who useth all the artifice of Words affirmative, and negative, to tell us so, as if on purpose to preclude all doubt and *subterfuge*, calls it *Eternal fire*, and *Eternal punishment*, where *their worm dieth not, their fire is not quenched, Torment for ever and ever*, and the like. Your Faith and certainty of which is as strong as your Christianity, and therefore by attempting any farther proof of this, to imply there is reason and necessity for doing so, were to suppose my Hearers Infidels.

Psal. xxxiv. 12.

But then this being granted that such is the Sinners *Fate* to lay down positively that it is his *Choyce*, and that he doth resolve for Death, is to suppose them worse than Infidels, more than irrational and brutish; Beasts cannot so desire against the possibilities of Appetite, break all the forces and instincts of Nature, as to *will destruction*, and *choose misery*. Yet that the Sinner does so is the ground of Gods Expostulation here, *Why will you dye?* David enquires as if it were a Prodigy to find, *What man is he that lusteth to Live?* And sure the *vicious* man does not, for *Wisdom* that is *Virtue*, says, *He that sinneth against me woundeth his own Soul, and all they that hate me love death*, Prov. viii. 36. And 'tis most evident, that they who eagerly, and out of vehement affection pursue and seize those things to which they know destruction is annex'd inseparably, they love and choose destruction, though not for it self, yet for the sake of that to which it clings. He that is certain such a Potion, howsoever sweetned and made palatable, is compounded with the juice of deadly Nightshade, if notwithstanding he will have the Poisonous draught, it is apparent he resolves to dye.

And that I may evince this is a settled obstinate incorrigible resolution in him, and by what ways and steps it comes to be so, I will lay before you the violent courses he does take to break through difficulties and obstructions that would trash and hinder him: And when the avenues to Death are strongly guarded, how he storms and forces them, overcomes all resistance possible, that he may seize on Sin and Death.

And

And First, When such persons have entred the Profession of Christianity in Baptism, and by early engagements tyed themselves to the observation of its duties, if Principles of probity in Nature, fomented by others, instill'd with Education, have made impressions of duty on the mind, and wrought a reverence and awe of God and of Religion, which is a fence about them, and does keep off Vice, by making it seem strange, uncouth and difficult, while these fears and averfations are root-ed in them; why then the first thing that they do, as soon as Youth and the Temptations do stir within them, is to poyson these their own Principles by evil Conversation, and from that and Example take infu-sions, which shall impregnate them with humours of being in the fashion of the World: Thus they labour to strangle the *then* troublefom modesties of Nature and of Virtuous breeding; thus they look out ill Com-pany to infect themselves: And surely they that seek the Plague and run into infection, we have cause to fear they have a *Resolution to dye*. But,

Secondly, If notwithstanding this in the first practices of Vice, their former Principles stir, and ferment within, and fret the Conscience, set that on working; why then if the sin sting gently, do but prick the heart, and make an out-let for a little gush of Sorrow, then in spight of *Scripture*, they do teach themselves to think that grief Repentance, and by the help of that conceit this sorrow cools, and doth allay the swel-ling of the mind, washes away the guilt and thought of the commission, *they have been sad*, and they believe, *repented*; as if those stings opened *the fountain for transgression*, and those little wounds did flow with Bal-som for themselves: And by this means that sting of the old Serpent sin, while it pretends to *cure* by hurting thus, proves indeed the *Tempter to go on*. For if this be all, why should a man renounce all the Contents and satisfactions of his Inclinations, and mortifie and break his nature to avoid a thing which is so easily repented for? No, if it be no worse they can receive this Serpent in their bosom, dare meet his sting, and run upon these wounds, and they do so till the frequent pungencies, and cicatrices have made the Conscience callous and insensible, the heart hardned.

But if their first essays of sin were made unfortunate by *Notoreity*, or some unhappy circumstance, and so the wound were deep, and the Conscience troublefom and restless, because this is very uneasie, these inward groans make discord in their chearful airs, make their life harsh, they therefore find it necessary to confront the shame with Courage of iniquity, go boldly on that so they may outlook it, fear their own Con-science that its wounds may not bleed. And as those Fiends of Men who Sacrific'd their Children in the fire to *Moloch*, that they might not hear their Infants shriek, nor their own Bowels croak, had noises made with Timbrels to out-voice them: So these to drown the cries and howl-ings of their wounded mind, put themselves in perpetual hurry of diver-tisement and Vice, make *Tophet* about themselves, and with the noise of Ryots overcome all other, because they will not hearken to those groans that call for the Physician of Souls, and then sure these *resolve to dye*.

Nay if this will not keep them quiet, you may see them sometimes ruffle with their own Consciences, desire present Convictions in the very instant of Commission, men so set on Death, that they *Condemn them-*

selves in that which they allow. And though a man would think there should be little satisfaction in those pleasures which Condemnation thrusts it self into, and which have an alloy of so sad apprehensions; yet such are it seems the satisfactions of sin: For while it stabs and gashes, He brave *Hero* of Iniquity, can charge the wounds and take the Vice.

Yea Thirdly, though the Lord himself appear, and take part in the Quarrel, joyn with our Principles and Conscience against the sin, and with importunate Calls alarm us, give us no rest, ordain a Function of men by whom he does beseech us, dresses their Messages with Promises of that which God is blessed in, and arms them too with Terrors such as Devils tremble at, and joyns his *Holy Spirit* too, that *Power of the Highest*, sends him in Tongues of Fire, that he also may Preach this to our very Hearts, and fright us with more flame: And yet the Sinner breaks these strengths, and vanquishes the Arts and strivings of Divine Compassion. If these Embassadors speak Charms, it is but what God tells our Prophet in this Chapter, *ver. 32.* *And lo thou art unto them as a very lovely Song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an Instrument.* And it does dye like that, as it there follows, *They hear thy words but they do them not.* And if they flash in Hell against their Vices, in torrents of threatening Scripture, they concern themselves no more than they would in the story of a new Eruption of Mount *Ætna* or *Vesuvius*. Yea they do *quench the Spirit* and *his fires*, do not like the *deaf Adder*, stop their ears against his whisperings, and the charms of Heaven (that were a weaker and less valiant guilt) but are Religious in hearing them, curious that they may be spoke with all advantages to make it harder not to yield and *live*, that so they may express more resolution to perish, and with more courage and solemnity may sin and dye.

Nay more, when God hath found an Art to draw themselves into a *League and Combination* against their Vices, bound them in *Sacraments* to *Virtue*; made them enter a *Covenant of Piety*, and seal it in the *Blood of God*, and by that federal Rite with hands lift up, and seizing on Christ's Body, and with holy Vows oblige themselves to the *performances*, or to the *Threats* of Gospel, which they see executed in that Sacrament before their eyes, see there *death is the wages of iniquity*, they shew themselves its damned consequences, while they behold it *tear Christ's Body*, *spill his Blood*, and *Crucifie the Son of God*; yet neither will this frightful spectacle, nor their own *ties* hold them from sin and ruine, they break these bonds asunder to get at them.

Wisd. I. 16.

The Wiseman says that *wicked men seek death* and *make a Covenant with it*, and so it seems: But sure they are strange wilful men, that seek it at *Gods Table* in the *Bread of Life*, that will wade through an *Ocean of mercy* to get at Perdition, and find it in the *Blood of Christ*, will drink *Damnation* in the *Cup of blessing*; men that *poysen Salvation* to themselves: They that contract thus for Destruction, and tye it to them at the Altar, with such sacred Rites and Articles, are sure *resolv'd and love to dye*.

Fourthly, God had provided other Guards to secure men from sin and Death, the *Censures of the Church*; of which *this Time* was the great Season, and the discipline of abstinence we now use is a piteous relique, all that the World will bear it seem: But as the Lord appointed them they

they were so close a fence, that our Saviour calls them *Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, as if they lock'd us in the Path of Piety and Life; and we must pick or break all that the *Key of Heaven* can make fast, burst *Locks* as well as *Vows* before we can get out, have liberty to sin. God having bounded in the Christians race as that among the *Grecians* was, which had a River on one side, and Swords points all along the other, so that Destruction dwelt about it on the borders: And God hath mounded ours with the River of Hell the Lake of Fire, and with these spiritual Swords (as *S. Cyprian* and *S. Hierome* call the Censures.) But yet a Mound too weak alas! to stand the Resolution and assaults of Vices now adays; which do not onely make great breaches in the Fence, but have quite thrown it down, and *sighted* it; and the Church dares not set it up again, should she attempt it they would *scoff* it down. Men will endure no bar in the way to Perdition; they will have *liberty of Ruine*; will not be guarded from it; so far from brooking *Censures* they will suffer no *Reproof*, nor *Admonition*, not suffer one word betwixt them and Death eternal.

But Fifthly, Though we will not let Almighty God restrain us with his *Censures*, yet he will do it with his *Rod*, and set the sharp stakes of *Affliction* in our walk, to keep us in; thus he makes sins sometimes inflict themselves, and then we straight resolve to break off from them; and while we suffer shame, and feel destruction in the Vice we shrink and uncling: And now the Sinner *would not dye*, especially if his Precipitance have thrown him to the confines of the grave; and while he took his full careers of Vice, the fury of his course did drive him to the ports of Ruine, and Death seemed to make close and most astonishing approaches, when standing on the brink of the Abyss, he takes a prospect of the dismal state that must receive him and his Vices, then he trembles and flies, his apprehensions swoon, his Soul hath dying qualms, caused as much by the Nausea of sin as by the fear of Hell: he is in agonies of passion and of Prayer both against his former courses, he never will come near them more; and now sure God hath catch'd him, and his will is wholly bent another way, now he will live the *new life* if God will grant him any: But alas! have we never seen when God hath done this for him, stretch'd out his Arm of Power, hal'd him from the brow of the Pit, and set him further off, how he does turn and drive on furiously in the very same path that leads to the same Ruine, and he recovers into death eternal?

And now this Will is grown too strong for the Almightyes powerful methods, and frustrates the whole Counsel of God for his Salvation, neglects his Calls and Importunacies whereby he warns him to consult his safety, to make use of Grace in *time*, not to harden his heart against his own mercies, and perish in despite of mercy. And when he can reject Gods Graces and his Judgments thus, despise his Conscience and his own Experience too, there is but one thing left wherein this Resolution can shew its courage, and that is,

Sixthly, *His own present Interests*; All which the Sinner can break through and despise, to get at Death. It is so usual to see any of the gross wasting Vices when it is once espoused, murder the Reputation, and all those great concerns that do depend upon a mans Esteem, eat out his Wealth and Understanding, make him pursue pernicious ways
and

and Counsels, besot him, and enslave him, fill his life with disquiet, shame and neediness, and the sad consequents of that, Contempt, and all that's Miserable and unpitied in this Life; and yet the sin with all these disadvantages is lovely, not to be divorc'd nor torn off from him, that I were vain should I attempt to prove a thing so obvious. I shall give but one instance of the power of the Will, the violence and fury of its inclinations to Ruine.

The man who for anothers inadvertency, possibly such as their own rules of Honour will not judge affront, yea sometimes without any shadow of a provocation, meerly because he will be rude, does that upon which they must call *one another to account*, and to their *last account* indeed at Gods dread Judgment-seat; whither when he hath sacrific'd two Families, it may be all their hopes and comforts in this Life; two Souls which cost the Blood of God, having assaulted Death when it was arm'd and at his heart, and charged Damnation to take Hell by Violence; he comes with his own and his Brother's blood upon his Soul to seize his Sentence, *Go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire*: 'Tis plain against all Interests of this World and the World to come, this man *will dye*. And yet this is one of the laudable and generous Customs of the Age. Neither doth this man stand alone, the *desperate Rebel* would come into the *Induction*, that without any hopes sets all on fire, to consume all here, and to begin his Flames hereafter.

But I have said enough to prove the *Resoluteness of a Sinners Will*, which is so great indeed that it is this especially which does enhance the guilt of sin into the merit of an endless punishment, this persevering obstinacy does deserve Hell and make it just.

For whatsoever inequality there is betwixt the short-liv'd pleasures of a sin, which dye while they are tasted, and put out themselves, and those eternal never-dying retributions of Vengeance, (As sure there is also betwixt *the life of Man*, and several of those *petty felonies* that forfeit it) yet the Law *does not murder* when it *Executes*. (I might have Numb. xv. 32, 35. instanc'd in the *gathering sticks upon the Sabbath day in Israel*.) For since the preservation of publique safety and propriety is valuable with the lives of many men, and to secure that and affright the Violation, it was necessary to affix such punishments to such offences; they that know the penalty, and wilfully, meerly to feed their other Vices, run upon it, justly suffer it: So that Man might not rob himself of that Immortal Glory which God had ordain'd him when he did see it absolutely necessary, thus to hedge Vice with Eternal Death: And as he set Angels and Flaming Swords to keep him out of *Paradise*, so to set Fiends and Flames to guard Hell from him, and to entail those Torments on Man's sin, which he had prepared for the Devil, and sealed the Deed in the Blood of his Son. If notwithstanding men renounce the blessedness, and against all their Interests and Obligations, in spite of all the Arts and Powers of Heaven, they will have the Torments; and, (what they never would attempt for *Paradise*) invade those flames to get to Hell, 'tis very just that God should let them have it; should not break his Decrees, dispence with Holy Laws so confirm'd, meerly to gratifie those that are obstinate for ruine, and against his whole Gospel quench Hell fires because men are resolv'd to run into them. This *Will does*, as it were, *even the Scales* betwixt the *Sin* and the *Damnation*, equal the pleasure

pleasure to the punishment, and fill the distance from a moment to Eternity.

But though this Will do clear God's Justice, yet it does not satisfy his Reason, he seems astonish'd at the choice; God himself cannot find a Ground for such a Resolution; and therefore does enquire, *Why will ye dye?* Which is God's question, and my second Part.

It is the present pleasure sin does tempt your sensuality withal, whose agitations are so quick and strong that they surprize or break the forces of your Reason, and your Principles, put the Mind in disorder, and then seize it with such violence as to lead it captive to the Law of Sin and Death? 'Tis true indeed thus both of them had their original, so they prevail'd in Paradise, for when the Woman saw the Tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eye, and a Tree to be desired to make one wise, she took thereof and she did eat, although she knew that God had said, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely dye*, Gen. iii. But there was generous pleasure here, such as tempted the Soul, assaulted it with the appearances of Wisdom, and divine Knowledge: *Ye shall be as Gods*, Gen. iii. 5. And sure 'tis no great wonder if the proper pleasures of the mind ingage it, therefore when God would give a Precept liable to a Temptation of being broke, he laid it in the sphere of those things that delight the Soul, of Knowledge; but far be it that those of sensuality should ever have prevail'd; Man may yield to the pleasure of being like God, but for pleasure to make himself a Beast is contradiction to Nature. For pleasure is but satisfaction of our appetites, and the more natural the inclination is, the higher and more powerful that Nature, and the desire eagerer, so much the more delightful is the satisfaction. Now it is certain that the reasonable faculty, the Soul or Spirit is the highest and most proper nature of a man: In all the rest he's not a step remov'd from Beasts, unless it be in shape, but in the accurateness of his senses is below them far; and therefore must be so in sensual satisfactions; but in his Soul he borders upon Angels, and does come towards God.

Now then that Soul being mans peculiar nature, the highest part of him, It follows its delights, Spiritual reasonable Joys must needs be the most natural and most proper for it, most conform'd to it, and therefore the most taking with it. This may be cleared most irrefragably.

A Beast hath several ingredients of Nature in his making, he is an heavy body, and a Vegetable, and he hath also Sense which is his highest nature. Now though the onely inclination of heavy bodies be to fall down to the Earth, and this be also natural to a Beast, we do not find that 'tis his greatest pleasure, sure he had rather feed than tumble in the Pasture; his chief delight lies in the satisfaction of his chiefest faculties, wherein he does excel, his Senses; and as Beasts differ and transcend in these, so do their pleasures also differ and exceed. A man also, as Aristotle says, does live a threefold Life: At first he is but a Plant-man, a growing span of living Creature, and he's born only into Animality, a Life of Sense, and at last educated into reasonable. Now the delights of his first Stages, whilst onely Vegetation and Sense live, although proportioned to those states, yet have no favour to the mind; he grows through Nuts and Rattles to the use of Reason, and the pleasures

fures of it also; these must keep even with the growing faculties and become higher, rational, and manly: Which if they do not, but the man still dwell upon the satisfaction of sense, he does confound the Stages, contradict the progresses of Nature; he hath the age and strength of Reason but to play the Child with, to exert it in those things that are but a Man's Rattles, hath the sagacity of an Intelligence merely to find out how to be a brute with greater luxury and relish.

Come therefore, shew me now the sins which the delights of Reason do betray you to, and I'll admit the Plea: But if you live your own *reverse* that you may dye; renounce all your own pleasures first, that so you may renounce the joys of God and Heaven; and fall from Nature that you may fall into Hell, this case hath no pretence; and those pleasures cannot *toll man* on to death, which till the man be dead, and the brute onely live within him cannot be his pleasures. And it is plain they are not pleasures to a Sober man that lives the life of *Reason*, not to say of *Grace*: Nor are they such to any man till he have train'd and exercis'd himself into an habit of enduring them, and by a discipline of Torment made himself experienc'd for Vice and for Damnation: Nor is there ever any pleasure in some Vices. What is there in the dismal Wishes of mans imprecating passion? there cannot be musick in those harsh horrors, and yet the Sinners *will destruction* so as that they *call to God* to pour it on them, and tear it down from Heaven, so that Pain and Disease seem to sauce those delights, and Death to be the tempter to the pleasure; 'tis evident mens reasons and their Practices must be first debauch'd, that they may count them Pleasures, and therefore pleasure cannot be the first mover in the Sinners race to Death.

But I will grant, that the Spirit and Flesh of Man by their so strait alliance and perpetual converse, may grow to have the same likes and dislikes, have but one appetite, and this alas! be that of flesh; to whose onely satisfactions the man useth himself, by long Custom of which, the Soul doth so imbibe the Inclinations of the Body, that nothing of another kind can possibly be relish'd. In this case sensuality hath pleasures, yet such as cannot answer Gods enquiry; for do but consult mans other Choices and you find a present satisfaction cannot work his Resolutions to forego great after-hopes, or run upon a foreseen ruine. Who will exchange his right to the Reversion of a Crown, which from his Father he shall certainly inherit and succeed to if he do out-live him, for a present Scene of Royalty, and choose a painted Coronet, the pomps and adorations of a Stage, and the applauses of a Croud before the real Glories of his Kingdom, the love and the obedience of his Subjects? And yet my Soul, the disproportion of the Sinners terms is infinitely greater; and there is no hazzard, which to make his choice of present things more flattering, the others hopes are liable to: For that Heir of the Crown may die before the Crown fall to him; but it is impossible that we should miss of ours except we put our selves by, by such choices; except we change it thus. And on the other side we know, men will adventure the Sentence of the Law by Robberies and murders to provide for Lusts, while they hope to be undiscovered: But sure a Prison made delightful by all arts of pleasure, and all plenties of it, will not hire a man to own those actions which shall forfeit him to certain shameful Execution the next Sessions, and yet this is the Sinners state exactly,
he

he is tīd and bound in the chain of his sins, they are it may be chains of Gold and softned with delices, but they reserve him to the Judgment of the great Assise: And yet he chooses these and puts them on as Ensigns of delight and honour.

Once more; Do not men choose a present Agony to keep off an afterevil, they tear their bowels with a Vomit to prevent a Surfeit, they cup and scarific, and with all artifice of pain upon themselves kill a Disease, yea they are well content to prolong torment so they may but prolong life; and though the preservation of it prove onely continued pangs, and all they can effect is onely this, that they are longer dying, yet they are glad to be so in all cases, except where the prescription is *Virtue*, and the death prescribed against *Eternal*.

Now why do you choose thus onely in Sin and Hell? 'Tis clear the very pleasure you change Heaven for, cannot invite you from this Life, and then you that will suffer any thing rather than you will dye, *Why* against all resistance *will you dye for ever?*

It is Secondly, because you know not what it is to dye the second Death: at least your notions of it are so slight and easie, that they cannot fright you from a pleasure or cope with a temptation to it; and so though present satisfactions are not able to engage you upon present ruin they can upon the after-death.

Indeed the Sinner would have reason if it meant no more than hath been taught of late by one that hath gained many Proselytes among the *Virtuosi* of Religion; *After the Resurrection the Reprobates shall be*, saith he, *in the state that Adam and his Posterity were in after his Sin* (i. e.) *the state we are now in, Live as we do, Marry and give in Marriage, and cease to be when they have got some heirs to succeed them in Tophet.* Poor unhappy Souls these! that never had any sin to merit being there, nor any Sentence to condemn them thither but this mans: Who must put them there successively one after other, to find employment for Everlasting-fire. A Doctrine such as had an Angel Preach'd from Heaven by *S. Paul's* award he must have been *Anathema*; when the Devil made Religions, and Theology came from the bottomless Pit, he never found out such an Engine to conveigh men into it as this pleasant notion of the punishment of sin therein; as if *Leviathan were made to take his pasture in that Lake also*, by such interpretations, which surely were contrived to make out the Assertion of that *Romish* Priest, who says, *that those in Hell love to be there*; nay more, that *'twas impossible for God to do a kinder thing for them than to put them there.* Doctrines to be abhorred as Hell it self; and yet upon these grounds he builds their Church by demonstration, so strong as that *the Gates of Hell cannot prevail against it*; and in truth they have no reason to assault it on these terms. But to pass by such dotages and frenzies, you will be able sure to check all those presumptions which grow from *sleight impressions* of the second Death, if you but take that prospect of it which the close of this time gives: look forward through this season, which is designed for you to *prepare the way of the Lord to his Passion* in, and you shall see the Death that does await iniquity.

Tho. de. Alb.

If you behold him coming to *Jerusalem* with *Hosannas* and *Palms* about him, as if Death were his *Triumph*, his Passion so desirable, that he rode to meet it, which he never did at any other time; and then

Luc. xii. 50. complaining he was *straitned until it were accomplish'd*; as he had throws
 Matt. xxvi. 30. of Longing after it, and *singing* when he went out to it, you would believe the Sinner never choise his death, sweetned by his most pleasant sin, with a more chearful eagerness. But then open the Garden and you
 Mat. xxvi. 39. see his apprehensions of it *throw him on his Face to pray against it*. See how he sweats and begs, his very Prayer is a Passion, the zeal of it is Agony! and canst thou choose that he so dreads and deprecates? and when he durst not meet the apprehensions, wilt thou stand the storm? see what a *sting death* hath, when it makes out-lets for such clots and globes of Blood, and stings the Soul so roo, that it pours out it self in Sweat. And then he sinks again under the deprecation of it, and prays that *that Cup may pass from him*. Blessed Saviour! when thou hadst just now made thy Death thy Legacy, thy Sacrament, dost thou intreat to scape this death? if *this Cup pass from thee*, what will the *Cup of Blessing* profit us? thou hadst but now bequeathed a Cup to us which was the *New Testament in thy Blood*, and now wilt thou not shed that Blood? But dost thou refuse thy Cup? Oh 'twas a *Cup of deadly Wine*, red with God Indignation, poison'd with Sin! And can the Sinner thirst for the Abyss of this, the Lake that hath no bottom? and when *he goes again, and prays the same words the third time*, be yet not onely so supine as not ask to scape it, seldom and very sleight in any Prayer or wish against it, but also so resolv'd to have it, as to gape that he may swallow it down to everlastingness? Follow him from that Garden and you see him even dying under his Cross, he cannot bear that when it is laden with sin, who yet *upholdeth all things by the word of his Power*. 'Tis
 Heb. i. 3. said the time will come when the Sinner will cry out to the *Hills to fall*
 Luc. xxiii. 30. *on him*, any weight but that of iniquity, the burden of that is intolerable, 'tis easier for him to bear a Mountain than a Vice, and yet Christ
 Matth. vii. 3. *saith he hath a beam in his Eye*, and can he shrink at any weight whose part, that is most sensible, tender to an expression, can bear that which shoulders must fall under, onely Pillars can sustain? Oh yes; that which did sink the shoulders of Omnipotence: Then the *Mountains* rather *and the Rocks to cover*; but in vain, they will not cover, for thy very Groans will rent them: Christ's were so sad that his did, *they tore the Rocks*, and that which is much more inflexible, the *Monuments*: Death started at them, and the bonds of the Grave loosened, and the Dust was frighted into Resurrection; and more, the Hypostatick Union seem'd rent by them, the God to have forsaken his own Person. And can the Sinner hope to stand this shock? will the courage of his Iniquity make his heart harder than those Rocks, more insensible than the Grave, and better able to endure than he that was a God? and will you die into this state eternally? which it was necessary for him to have the assistance of Divinity in his Person, that he might be able to endure one day, and which yet notwithstanding made one day intolerable.

The sum is this, a Person so desiring Death and yet so dreading it, and sinking under the essays of it, and this Person the Son of God, and that dread meerly because there was sin in the Death, (for if this were not in the cause, no Martyr but had born death with more courage but that Son of God) all this as it does leave no Reason for the Sinners choise of death Eternal, so neither doth it leave a possibility of bearing it: And if so, give me leave in God's Name to Expostulate, the last imployment of these words, *Why will ye die?*

After

After this killing Prospect, while the damp of it is on you, let my Bowels debate with you, which yearn more over you than they did over my Beloved Son in whom I was well pleased; when I have sent my only Son, God, one with my own Self, to be made Man, that he might suffer what was necessary to be suffer'd to preserve you from eternal sufferings; when I have laid on *him that was brought up with me from everlasting, and* Prov. viii. 30. *that was daily my Delight*, all your Iniquities and my own Indignation, that so you might be freed from both: When I have found out, made an Expiation, with which I am more pleased than ever your transgressions offended me, which hath quite blotted out your sins and my Displeasure; when your Redemption from death is made, the Ransom paid, the Price is in my hand, why do you then refuse your selves, your own Eternal Blessedness which was thus dearly purchas'd and is ready for you? Why will you seize that Indignation which you are redeemed from, and force those sufferings on your selves, which have been laid already and inflicted on another? 'Tis a small thing that you refuse me, the return of my Expence, that which I gave my Son for; but do you renounce Happiness because my Love and Blood is in it? and will you die because you may, and I desire you should live? when my Son went from the essential felicities of my Bosom to embrace Agonies, and dy'd for you; why will you also die? as you have slain his Person, will you Crucifie his Kindness too? and crucifie your selves rather than have it? and having us'd him most despightfully, will you therefore use his favours so? and not let his Death and Passion do you any good? condemn his methods of Salvation, his divine Acts of making you for ever Blessed? is your Saviour and Life it self so hateful to you? and after such Redemption of your persons is there no redemption of your Will from perishing? nothing of value that can bribe your choice against it? nothing that can betroth you into a desire of Life, and take you off from your resolves to die? had I set no advantage on the other side, if sin had sweetned misery to your Palate, it had been no such great despite and contradiction to Appetite; but when Heaven and the Joys of God are in the Scale against it, to prefer Misery is Wretchless beyond aggravation. *Oh why will you rather die?* Those very things that tempt your Wills were they abstracted from the death they do inveigle you into, were they sincere and innocent, if they were set against that Life, that blessed life, immortal Life, would vanish quite in the comparison when you should see they are but frolicks of delight, that never take you but when you are tun'd up to them, in moods and fits; and the complacencies you take in them are but starts of Appetite, that swells and breaks out to them and then falls again, and so the pleasures die even in the birth, and therefore cannot satisfy; indeed do but disquiet an immortal appetite such as man's is, so that it were impossible to choose a life, these rather, although there were no misery annex'd to them, if you consider'd: For it were to resolve that a few drops were more than an immense Ocean of Delight, a Moment longer than Eternity, a Part were bigger than the Whole, an Atome greater than an Infinite. Now there is nothing then that can prefer these to your choice but the Death only; and *Oh will ye without and against all Temptation, Will ye die?*

O thou my Soul! take other Resolutions, thou seest the things that men with so much care and sin provide to make their lives delightful here,

although success answer their care, are vain and helpless things, and life it self as vain, and I must die, and drop from Heaven; and therefore be thou sure to take a care their treacherous comforts do not make me die into the everlasting want of them and of all comforts.

The Artificial pleasures of the Palate whether in meats or drinks, forc'd tastes, that do at once satisfy and provoke the Appetite, will relish ill when I begin to swallow down my spittle; but sure I am, I am invited to the *Supper of the Lamb, to drink new Wine with Christ in my Father's Kingdom*; The *fatted Calf* is dressing for my Entertainment, and shall I choose to be a while a Glutton with the Swine, rather than the eternal Guest of my Father's Table and Bosom? and refuse these for a few sick Excesses which would end in qualms, and gall, and vomits, if there were no guilt to rejoyt too, and which will kindle a perpetual Feaver? The Honours and the Glories of this Life will lose their shine when I am going to make my Bed in the Dark, in a black lonely desolate hole of Earth; my Gayeties must die, when I *must say to Corruption, thou art my Father, and to the Worm thou art my Mother and my Sister*: And if there were pride or ambition in them, their Worm will never die, that Pride will make me fall as low as *Lucifer*, that Glory will go out into utter darkness, and that Ambition change my Honour into everlasting Shame, Envy, and Torment: But sure I am that there are Glorious Robes, and Thrones, and Scepters in God's Promises; and let thy gayety, *my Soul!* be in the Robe of Immortality, the Throne of thy Ambition that of Glory.

When I shall lie tortur'd or languishing in my last Bed, Palaces and Possessions will no more relieve me, than the Landskip of them in the Hangings can do it. And if there were Covetousness, Bribery, Sacriledge, or Injustice in them, I shall be carried out of these, and have no other Habitation assigned me, but with the Devil and his Angels, shall inherit and possess nothing but the Almighty's Indignation for ever.

But *in my Father's House are many Mansions*, Places prepared for me, and an Inheritance as wide as Heaven, as Endless and Incorruptible as Eternity, and God Himself: And sure if I may choose, there I will live where there is neither *Will nor possibility to die*; where there is *Life, fulness of Joy, Pleasures for Evermore*. To which, &c.

The Sixth

SERMON,

Preached at

WHITE-HALL.

PSALM LXXIII. v. 25.

Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee:



Y Text is the result of the Pious man's Audit, the foot of the account in summing up his whole that he hath either in Possession or Desire; and instead of nice Division of the Words I shall observe in them these Subjects of Discourse.

First, the different tenure, or condition of Estates in the two different Countreys we relate to, this here is a Land onely of *desires*, the other is a place of enjoyments, *Have in Heaven, Desire on Earth.* Yea

Secondly, Though our estate here in this Earth be present, and that other seem removed far off, yet the possessions of that are present and in hand, but the most native satisfactions of the Earth are still at distance, onely the object of our aims and expectations *I have, now I have in Heaven, on the Earth I but desire.*

Thirdly, Here is the matter of both these desires and enjoyments to the Pious man; *No Person or no thing* (for so it bears also) *but God: There is nothing upon Earth that I desire besides thee.* And as to *Heaven* the negation is express'd emphatically by a Question, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?*

Yet least this Question should look like an Expostulation, and he that asks it seem unsatisfied with his Portion, we will therefore,

Lastly, see the Importance of it to the Christian, since our *Saviour* is gone up into Heaven, see whom the Christian hath there: And if the Psalmist could find none but *God*, and *David* (if he were the Author) could not see the *Son of David* there, yet since *Christ* is set at the *Right hand*

hand of God, the Christians present Interest in Heaven is such, that looking with contempt on all that worldly men applaud themselves in the enjoyment of, rejecting all but *thee O Christ*, he justly triumphs in resolving of this question to himself, and being satisfied in *having thee*, he does renounce even the *desiring any thing but thee*.

Of these in their order beginning here on Earth, where our tenure even of earthly things is but *desire*, this World does give no satisfactions in hand, but still they are onely the objects of our Expectations and wishes.

When God hath given Man an erect Countenance, Eyes that do naturally look towards him, and the very frame of him is such, that Heaven is his constant Object; it were no wonder if his looks and thoughts were always there, since both the duty and necessity of that does seem imprest upon him in his making, and to *desire things above*, is, as it were, *the Law in his members*.

But when he swims in delicacies here upon the Earth, is immerst in the plenties of all kinds, that these should give him nothing but *desires of themselves*, that the delights should not be present to him, but he should still pursue and need that which he is encompassed with, that while with open mouth and in a most intemperate current he swills down the pleasures, yet his open mouth should gape only with thirst, and he be sensible of nothing but the want of these, is strange even to astonishment: Yet such it seems the nature of them is. When *S. John* would enumerate all that is in the World the particular that he gives in is thus, *1 John ii. 16. All that is in the world, the lust of the Flesh, the lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life*. He does not say, the objects of these Lusts that are to serve and satisfy them, for *there's no such thing as satisfaction*, but onely lust; and if we make enquiry into the particulars we shall find it.

To begin with that of the Eyes, *Covetousness, or the love of Money*: 'Tis evident that where an Object is not useful to the faculty, it cannot satisfy, for satisfaction is fulfilling of our needs and uses, but Money is not useful to the sight, nor indeed does it prove useful to, or serve any of the Covetous mans occasions or faculties; rather the contrary in every kind, he does bereave himself of good because he hath it; He is in agonies of trouble and sollicitude, lest he should need, and not have that, which when he hath acquir'd he will still need, and will not have enjoyment of. Nor is it possible it should be otherwise, for since there is no natural original or cause of this his Appetite, for 'tis not emptiness that makes him hungry, who is more ravenous the more full he is, whose most empty bowels shrink and cling together, and having learn'd not to expect repast, while his bags and desires stretch, and are enlarg'd by being stuff'd.

Nor is it fear of future want that makes him eager to provide so, for why should he be so unsatisfied in his providing against want, that will want more the more he is provided?

And since as there is no natural cause, so there is also no natural measure for this Appetite of his; for Natures measure is our real uses of the Object. But this man heaps up useful things that he does never mean to use: Since therefore it hath neither bound nor cause in Nature, 'tis monstrous, and must needs be an unlimited lust, incapable of satisfaction:

tion: And all this man's Wealth does purchase nothing for him but *desires*, and is not the *content* but the *Lust of his Eye*.

And the same reasoning will conclude the next, *the Pride of life*, which is the Lust of a Sense as wholly unconcern'd in all the Pomps and garnishes of Pride, as the Eye is in Wealth: 'tis a Lust of the Ear, all is but the man's passion to hear himself, his trappings, or condition commended. The Learned man that's proud, does think of no return for all his toys and watches, all the present racks and tortures of his mind, and all the after-ones that he does pull upon his body, but to be spoken well of: He fasts, mortifies, and denies himself more than the Covetous man can do, meerly to fill himself with wind; he reconciles the *Babel* of all Languages, and Sciences too in his own head but for a word, onely to hear an *Euge*, and this with such solicitude that if the breath of mens Applause should fail him he would straight expire, as if his Soul *breath'd* onely at his *Ear*. If my pride lies in gayeties, all Natures Wardrobe must be rifled, the beauties of the Universe defloured, the Art and Sweat too of all Nations employed to attire my person, or to dress my Room, rather indeed to dress the Tongues and furnish out the talk of other persons, who must entertain mine Ears with the discourse of my own splendors; which is all the use I can make of it; the Eastern Rocks must send me Diamonds, meerly to dart a line of light into anothers eyes, which may return to me in a report that I have such fine Jewels, and I have nothing else of all my sumptuous glories but the meer *Eccho* of their shine, which is reflected and beat back to me in commendations: With so much expence anxiety and sin, I do provide onely for other mens discourses, or it may be, envies. Now these are none of my enjoyments, and therefore I have nothing of them but the *Lust* and the *desire*.

As for *those of the flesh*, the third remaining kind, they seem indeed to be exempted from this reasoning; the sensual person gorges his desires, and in *Solomons* phrase *makes his Soul enjoy good*: Yet the same *Solomon* saves that appearance too, in saying *when provisions encrease, they are encreased that eat them; and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?* My broad and my cramb'd Tables do not more enlarge or serve my appetite, give me no satisfaction but onely that of seeing many Dishes full, and many men devouring them, as if *Luxury* also were a *lust of the Eye*. It hath been said indeed, that the Eye is the Gluttons most unsatisfied and greedy part, and it must needs be so if its lust lie to all that other men devour, and if it crave not onely for the mans own stomach, but for throngs of Clients, Parasites, and attendants. And 'tis too plain the other Twin *Intemperance* lusts by the same rules and laws: It does not onely claim its seat in the Eye, which makes it self a Judge of Liquors for the Palate, and does not choose them by the uses of their moisture, but by their body, by their *air*, and by the *mode*, and other *Rules of the authentick standard Drinkers*; as if men thirsted in the fashion onely: But this Eye also, as the Riotous mans did, gapes for company, and thirsts to see the Vice go round, it drinks in nothing with so much delight as the Wine, when a weaker Companion returns it back again in Vomit, at that foul horrid spectacle it sparkles and triumphs. Now 'twere in vain to ask *Solomons* question, *What good is there in this?* or what enjoyment? to urge that meats and drinks cannot give satisfaction

to the Eye that hath no Palate, and then cry out *Oh Prodigy* that it should Lust thus ! As for the other kind of Riots, where with arts of Epicurism men contrive to feast and entertain their private Appetites, and put a Patrimony into sauce for their own Palats, men sordidly Luxurious. 'Tis evident that these are studied to provoke, men choose such Wines as they may longest drink, and with elaborate condiments make forc'd *hunger* as well as *dishes*, so that the Riotous *design onely to Lust*, and the whole mystery of Luxury is to *create desires*.

Lastly, for that one that hath ingrois'd the name of *Lust*, it gives in a full Evidence against it self. For the *Adulterer*, much more irrational than the most *greedy Miser* ; is insatiate in *desiring* what he *hath*, and his Lust will not use his remedy, lest so it should allay and quench the Lust : And whilst with so much feaver of desire, he courts nothing else but the *change*, and values that alone equal with all the discontents of this life, all the miseries of that to come, and will *go to the Devil* meerly for *variety*, as it is plain : Adultery hath nothing *proper* to it self but the *desire*, is a meer looseness of the Fancy, which ranges in wild lusts, and which hath no enjoyment that's peculiar to it but the lusting onely ; so 'tis also plain that this Lust must be endless, for that principle of Change which gives it all its incitation must never let it rest ; for then 'tis not variety. S. John said therefore most expressly, *All that is in the World is Lust* ; men onely can *desire here*, pursuing their *desires* just as they do their shadows, no eagerness or hast can bring them nearer, still they onely pursue, yea like him that would hugg and force a Cloud, his empty arms return upon his breast with strokes ; and while they seek to catch the Object wound his Bosom : And thus it must be till we fix our passion there, where onely there is satisfaction even on *God* ; the object of the pious mans desire, and my next Part.

Nothing besides thee, or with thee : so it signifies also.

There is nothing upon Earth that I desire with thee.

Had he said, *Nothing without thee*, the emptiness of every thing below which the Lord and his Blessing is not in, had made this his determination just and necessary : But sure when God hath put other needs in my making, and hath provided supplies for them, those also are as just and necessary objects of desire, while they are with and under him : But yet, he that had brought all his affections into *Davids* frame, might well say he desired nothing upon Earth *besides*, nothing *with God* ; for he had weaned his very Flesh and all the craving appetites of Sense from their own objects, and had fix'd them upon God in all their strength and vigour. My Soul, saith he, *thirsteth for thee*, (elsewhere, *my Soul gaspeth unto thee, even as a thirsty Land*,) and *my flesh also longeth after thee*, Psalm lxxiii. 1. How ! My Soul thirsteth for thee ? *with thee* indeed is the Well of Life : But Thirst is an Appetite, gasping a consequent defailance and impatience of the Body ; to both which the Soul is a meer stranger, as it is also to the ways by which the Body does desire ; for the Soul is drawn by moral engagements, by persuasions and motives, there is place for deliberation and Choice in her Desires, she can demur in her pursuits, divert her Inclinations, and quench a Desire with a Consideration ; but the Flesh pursues in a more impulsive manner, is drawn and spurr'd on by such impetuous propensions as are founded in matter : You can no more persuade a thirsty Palate nor to thirst,

thirst, than you can woo a falling Stone to stay its haft, or invite it to turn aside from its direction to the Center. Yea but the Soul also exerts it self in all these appetites of flesh and matter, and with all their violence when it looks on God, when we have once had a taste, or when indeed we but discern our needs of him, whether our Temporal, or Spiritual, those of the Soul or Flesh, all the desires of both then fly at him, and with a tendency most close and uncontrollable, then nothing besides him. For all the appetites of Body croud into the Soul that they may catch at God, that *Thirsts* and *Gaspes*. And the Soul does put on the violent impetuous agitations of the Bodies Appetites; *My Soul thirsteth for thee, and my Flesh also longeth after thee*. What *Longing* is, whether an Appetite or Passion of the Flesh or Mind, whose signatures are more express indeed upon the Flesh than those of any other, yet whose impulses are so quick and so surprizing, as they were Spirit; I shall not now enquire: but sure if the Flesh long it should be for some carnal Object, for that is proportion'd to it; Flesh and the Creature use to close indeed, and they imbibe each other, as if they knew to fill and satisfy each other; yea some there are that have brought down their Souls to the propensions of Flesh, have given to their very Spirits an infusion of carnality, for *they mind onely fleshly things*. But by the rates of *David's* practice it should seem the pious man does the just contrary; sublimes his *Flesh* into a *Soul*, drains all the carnal Appetites out of it, weans it from all its own desires, and teacheth it those of the Spirit onely, makes it *long for God*. Now he whose flesh is defecated thus, and as it were inur'd to the condition which it shall put on, when it awakes from its corruption, as if it were already in that place, whose happiness and desires have no use of Body, and were in that state where their Bodies *neither hunger or thirst*, for these he hath translated from his flesh; 'tis his *Soul onely thirsts*, and that for God: As if he were indeed like *Angels* now, how can this man desire any thing on Earth besides the Lord, who is and does already what they are and do in Heaven, where we have nothing but thee?

But notwithstanding this exalted temper, though we should arrive at this *Seraphick constitution of desires*, and though God hath now made himself to us the proper object of these appetites, for since God struck the Rock for us *which Rock was Christ*; since the *true Bread came down from Heaven*, if our *Flesh long for God* there is a satisfaction ready, he hath made his *Flesh be meat* indeed; if our *Souls thirst for God*, he can furnish drink for a Soul, the Blood of God.

But yet while this Soul sojourns in this earthly Tabernacle, the man will still want other supplies, and may be not desire them; or can he choose indeed? For they that tell us stories of some men, whose hungers and thirsts after God as they devour'd all other desires in them, so also gave themselves no other satisfaction but *panem Dominum*, that *aplov ē mētoroy* *Super substantial daily Bread, the Lord*; these men I say, would find it hard to make out how bare *Species* could nourish and sustain a bodily life. Yea Christ himself when he was upon the Earth did hunger, and although it was his meat to do his Father's Will, yet when he was an hungered *Angels came and ministred unto him*, and then may not our earthly needs desire something besides him?

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That while we are upon the Earth all those necessities are in our constitution is certain; but that we need not desire for them, or any thing besides Him, is as certain: Because to them that desire him *all these things shall be added*, they are annex'd by Promise, *Matth. vi. 33.* it is for such to be solicitous who would have something they must have *alone*; something that cannot come *along with God*. But if I be assur'd that all my needs shall be supply'd in him, I need *desire nothing besides him*; now this Promise he must perform; for he that when he put Man in a state of Immortality in Paradise, provided him a Tree of Life that might for ever furnish and sustain him: For that Age also that he does design a man a being for his Service here upon the Earth, he must allow him necessities for his being and his Service, otherwise he can nor serve, nor be: And then if they be certain what need he desire them? *Διὰ τοῦτο οὐδὲ αὐτὴν ἀπὸ καλῆς, ἀλλ' αὐτὴν μὲν ἔπεα θαρρῆν δὲ ὡς ἐν τέτων ἐκείνοις προσθεμένων* saith *S. Chrysostome*; These are not objects for our careful wilhes, but our trusts and confidences, we may assure our selves of these if we have him, these are his Appendages, and then why should I put them with him into my Devotions? when my Soul lies gasping towards God in Prayer, my desires seizing on his Blessednesses, to take them off from him, and to make my desires turn aside to little earthly things and fix them there, is to affront not my God onely, but my Prayer too; and when these things are sure, seems to betray a mind too Earthly and too apprehensive of these needs: Surely I were most strangely necessitous, or strangely greedy, if both God and *that which shall be added to him* were not enough for me: More wretched, or else more unsatisfied than Hell, if the Almighty were not sufficient for me; if he be my provision, then I need desire nothing besides him.

Psal. Cxlvii. 9.
Psal. Clv. 21.
Psal. Cxlii. 15.

But yet Necessities will crave; Hunger does croak aloud, Thirst makes the insensate Earth to gasp; as if with open mouth it gap'd not onely to receive but beg Gods showers, and God expects to be intreated for these things: *He feeds but those young Ravens that do call upon him, and the young Lions roar to him and seek their meat at God: The eyes of all things wait on him* for that; yea, this our Psalmist in this very Psalm desires other things; and Christ himself hath put into his little Summary these needs and these desires, *Give us this day our daily bread*; and my Text does but regulate not exclude these desires, if we shall read it in the old Translation, *there is none upon Earth that I desire in comparison of thee* *לֹא כִּי* There's none or nothing that I desire or delight in *equally with thee, like thee*, so we translate the same word, *ver. 5.* I shall not doubt to beg what my needs crave: But if God, and any the most signal earthly advantage stand in competition, and I cannot have one with the other, his Providence or his Commands have made them inconsistent, that I will not desire *with him*, then he shall be my Choice alone: Rather Obedience and my God than any satisfaction how desirable soever!

This is the Touchstone of a Pious mans desires; 'tis not unusual for inclinations to things below, more to possess our thoughts, employ our faculties than any other, and we are far more sensible of their impressions, more busie in the pursuit, and more tender in our cares of them: But if upon contest betwixt God and our inclinations, upon debate betwixt a Pleasure and Command, we can decree for God and for Obedience,

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pass Sentence with the Precept, we are safe, here the desire is not inordinate. 'Tis a known instance, and you may have seen, a tender Mother spending almost her whole time in caressing her little Infant, you would think she had Eyes for no uses but to view it, and that she had her Arms and Breasts but to embrace and suckle it, to whom these are so wholly given up as if they had no part for any other, as the Husband, had no share in her entertains and caresses of whom are far more sleight and not so pressing: But should it come to this pinch once, that she must straight resolve to part with one of these, however close her Arms would grasp her Child to rescue him (to force whom thence were like the tearing of her bowels from her) yet would she give those bowels to redeem her bosom guest, and the Husband would be the Choice; so that although the other inclinations were more expressive, these are the stronger and the better settled. So it may happen, we may be more sensibly affected to some dear things here below, our thoughts, and Eyes, and our embraces cling and fasten more to these; but if it come to this that we must leave one, break with the Duty or the Passion; if we resolve however not to part with God, but lay hold there and let the other go, then our affections are not onely regular when we *desire nothing in comparison with him*, but our *desires are enjoyments, seize and take possession of him, and we have him*: So my Text implies here, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* importing that *we have him*: Which brings me to the other parts that yet remain to be discours'd of.

Three things are here to be considered:

1. That *Heaven is the place of Possessions* in opposition to this Land of *Desires*. 2. That *God is the possession there*. 3. That *the Pious man hath this possession in present*.

The first of these is so much common place, I shall not stay upon it; those onely qualities that make this World to be a Land of Desires, have no place there, to wit, the *instability* and *emptiness* of all things in it, he that lays hold on them does but grasp *Mercury*, which the more he clasps the more he forces it to slip away, and he retains onely the soyl and the defilement of it, like *Lightning* which but passes by, stays not to cherish, onely dazels, and, it may be, scorches: So the shine of Earthly glories startles the mind, amuses us, inflames desires of them, and goes out. But then above the tenure is Eternity, and that assures immutability; yea, if it be *nunc stans*, an indivisible Infinity of permanent duration, whose every point does coexist to every point, a *perfect and entire possession, all at once, of an interminable life that never can be all possesst*; then nothing can pass by us, or cease from us, but we shall always every moment have, what we shall have in every any moment: Our enjoyment also being like him that we enjoy, *all in the whole and all in every part*; being not onely endless in the mass, but every moment of it is immortal: And then there can be nothing but enjoyment; no place for desire there, where there is nothing absent, where all past and all futurity is always present; and where also the Infinite and all-sufficient God is the Possession; which is my next Proposition, and that God himself affirms.

Gen. xv. i. *I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward*. Yea, this he hath present possession of, which my third Proposition and my Text asserts, in saying, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* importing *thee I have*.

The things we call most our possessions here both personal and real, are our *portions* and *inheritances*: Now David claims God under both these dues, *Thou art my portion O Lord and the lot of mine Inheritance*; as other men maintain themselves by these, so I live upon thee: And that we may not think that God is such but in *Reversion*, those are *present* possessions which men reap the uses of *in present* to themselves.

Now what is there of God the Pious man hath not the present uses of? *His Eyes are over him, and his Ears are open to his Prayers*, watch to attend each motion of his heart, and *underneath him are the everlasting Arms* to carry and sustain him, his *right hand* wears him as his *gig-net*, and his *left hand* pours down Blessings on him; his *wings are spread* for him to nestle in that warm security, and hide him in the *shadow* of; his *bowels sound and turn within him* with compassion over him, and *himself is about his Bed and about all his paths*; not so much to spy out his ways, as to preserve him in them all, and *he waits that he may be gracious*. In a word, all the Securities that Gods Preserving Mercies signify, the watches of his Providence, the Blessings that fulfill his Attributes of goodness, all are exerted upon his occasions, are made the present objects and the satisfactions of his nearest senses, and he may *taste and see how gracious God is*.

And then give me O Lord! seizin of this the Pious man's Estate, I shall not envy other mens possessions; though one lay House to House, and Land to Land till he become the Lord of his Horison, and his Eyes cannot travel out of his Demesne: For notwithstanding that we may have known ill Courfes or ill Accidents consume all this, or Force throw him out of all, and that great Lord have no House but a Goal, nor Land enough to make a Grave: But sure I am, that I shall be provided for in all necessities, unless there happen such a one for which there's no relief in God; nor can I be disseis'd, they must void Heaven ere they can disfurnish me: *For thee I have in Heaven*.

But yet, though chance nor violence cannot put me out, yet I may forfeit this Possession too; for *Sin will separate betwixt me and my God*, cast me out of his presence and enjoyments, as sure as it did Adam out of Paradise. And then alas! if I had none but him in Heaven, he is now become my Adversary, holds possession against me, as he did that of Paradise with flames; so he does *Rain snares, fire and brimstone thence*, and *this is all the Sinner's portion*, Psalm xi. All that I am like to get, unless I have a person that will attribute the cause, or mediate, there is no hopes of a recovery for me if I have *none in Heaven but thee*.

Now here my last Consideration will come in.

If while my Soul lies grovling under fearful Apprehensions of its Forfeiture, casting about for help and finding none upon the Earth, if it look upwards and enquire *whom have I in Heaven?* have I none there but my offended Adversary God? it may resolve it self with comfort he hath other interests there. For,

First, I have an *Intercessor* there, Rom. viii. 34. a Master of Requests, one that will not onely hand in my Petitions, get access for my Prayers and my tears to God, but will make them effectual: For saith S. Paul, *Seeing we have a great High Priest that's passed into the Heavens, let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy and find Grace*

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in time of need, Heb. iv. 14, 16. For though my supplications have not strength nor ardour that can mount them into Heaven, and are too impure, however wash'd in my repenting Tears, to draw nigh to the Lord, yet being put into the High Priests Censor with the Altar coals to give them holy flame, and wrap'd up in his Cloud and Smoak of Incense that will cover all the failings of my Prayers, they may get access into his Ears and his Compassions. Indeed how can they choose when Christ does joyn his Intercessions? for my requests will go where the High Priests do go; he carries them, now He himself doth *sit at the right hand of God*: The intercessions that are made for me are made upon the Throne, and therefore cannot be repuls'd from thence, and such desires command and they create, effects.

But should my Prayers fail, and should God *hide himself from my Petitions*, withdraw himself and *hide his face* from them, although they be even before his face. Yet

Psal. lv. 1.

Secondly, I have an *Advocate* there too, *1 John ii. 1, 2.* *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins*; one that not onely pleads for me, but brings the satisfaction of my Forfeiture in his hands, makes the just value plead; appears there with his Blood, and proves a recompence.

'Tis *Jesus Christ the righteous Advocate*, that does propitiate and atone for, what he pleads for; purchase what he begs. 'Tis true, that poor Worm, saith he, hath provok'd thee often Lord! but thou didst smite *the Man that is thy fellow* for it; Behold my Hands, and look into my Sides, see there thy Recompence; wilt thou refuse that Satisfaction thy self didst contrive, and thy beloved Son did make? why did a Person of the blessed Trinity descend from Heaven and Divinity to be made Sin and be a Curse; but to Redeem him from the Curse and Sin, and to entitle him again to the possession of Heaven and God? Why was I Crucified but that thou might'st be aton'd and he be pardon'd? Thus he solicites for us there, presents himself in our stead, as our Attorney. He was not a publique Person onely on the Cross, but he is so at the right hand of God; as he was there our Representative and bore our sins, so he is here our Representative and bears our wants; was there our Proxey to the Wrath of God, is here our Proxey to his Mercies and Compassions. He looks upon himself as in our case, whose Cause and Persons he supplies, and so is prompted to desire and beg for our poor sakes, and he looks upon us as on himself, and so obtains as for his own beloved sake, pleads as our selves, and then as to himself he does decree Sentence and grant: For

Zech. xiii. 7.

Thirdly, I have there a *Judg*, and this is he, *who sits at the right hand of God to Judg the quick and dead*; I might have said a *Saviour*, for he was exalted to a *Saviour to give Remission of Sins*: But my *Judg* is as kind a word. For however there be some will cry for *Rocks and Hills to hide them* from his Face, yet this they are afraid of is the Face but of the *Lamb, Apoc. vi. 16.*

Acts v. 31.

And it is strange that they who can look upon Hell, and charge Fiends in a sin, should tremble at a Lamb, and fly him so: But to the Faithful and sincere endeavouring Christian though he sins, as his *Advocate* is his *propitiation*, so his *Judg* is his *Sacrifice*; is that *Lamb that does take away the sins of the World*, is his *sin-offering*, his *expiation* onely remov'd

remov'd off from the *Altar* to the *Judgment-Seàt*, indeed the *Mercy-Seat*, the *Throne* of his *Atonement* and his *Absolution*: Where his *Judg* notwithstanding that his *Forfeit* shall *Decree Possession* to him, *Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.*

Mat. xxv. 34. Lastly, we have our *first fruits*, for so *S. Paul* does call our *Saviour*; and then in whatsoever sense that which is done to the first Fruits is applicable to the *Harvest* (all this being hallowed in their *Consecration*) in that sense we our selves are raised to the right hand of *God* together with this our *First Fruits*. And now *O Lord!* *whom have I in Heaven but thee?* I have my *self* in *pledg* and *earnest* there.

And then they that rather than have these *Interests*, these *Heavenly possessions* in present, will have onely desires here on *Earth*, are certainly of a perverse and *Reprobate choice*. Sure it would make *Consideration* sick to think of the comparison betwixt the after-expectations of a *Pious man*, and those things which our worldly persons call present *Enjoyments*; how for the little spangles of their pride, they are so taken with its rustling *Pomp*, they reject *Glory* that can never wither, fade, or fully; forfeit the being cloath'd upon with *Immortality*. How they lose all that everlasting *Heaven* means, for little things that go by in a *Whirlwind*, come in storm and so they pass away; refuse immortal *Hallelujahs* for a *Song*, cast away solid *Joys*, and an *Eternal weight* of *Blessedness* for froth, for the shadow of *imoak*. Perchance this may be said for them, the nearness of the object does impose upon them, they choose something in present rather than dry future hopes. But then when that advantage too lies on the other side, their *Choice* hath no *Temptation*; when the *Pious mans* possessions are in hand, the others onely in desire; in view indeed they may be, he does catch at and pursue them still: But the hinder *Wheel* of the *Chariot* that presses and with larger turns and rowlings hastens after, may as soon hope to undertake the first, as that man reach a satisfaction; still it removes, and he does onely heat his appetite in posting after it, onely get more desire. Now 'tis prodigious that these great *Men* of *Sense* should be men of such *Faith* and *Expectation* as to trust and hope in things that have so constantly, so daily mock'd their confidences and desires, yet be not onely *Infidels* to all *Gods* blessed preparations which they have nor reason nor *Experience* against, but also have no sense nor relish of himself in present: *Not taste nor see how gracious the Lord is.*

'Tis said, that the desires of *Earthly sensual things* do make the greatest part of the *Torments* of *Hell*: Now though this *Doctrine* be false and pernicious, yet 'tis plain that *Torment* must attend strong passions, and most infinite desires which are radicated in the *Sinner's heart*, and which he carries hence and cannot there deposite, and to which yet satisfactions are impossible, against his knowledge to be mad, to have what he knows all the *World* cannot make it possible for him to have; this tears his *Soul*. Affections, these that may be said in some sense to fulfil some of the expressions of the *Torments* of that place, their *Envy* makes the gnashing of their *Teeth*, and their *Desires* are their *Vultures*. Thus *Tantalus's* riotous hunger that does gnaw his bowels, is his *Worm* that never dies; and his intemperate thirst his everlasting burnings; and his *Water* that he cannot reach or taste of, is his *Lake of fire* without *Metaphor*; So that desire alone without its satisfaction, is so much of *Hell*,
and

and yet this is the worldly sensual mans estate exactly here on Earth; for he hath nothing but *desires* and *lusts*; and his condition is not easier at all, for how is *Tantalus* more wretched than a *Midas*, or than any covetous wretch, who in the midst of affluence and heaps, hungers as much as *Midas* did for *meat* and for *Gold* too, and can touch neither for his uses? so that the Worlds delights are very like the miseries of Hell, and men with so much eager and impatient pursuit do but anticipate their torments, and invade Damnation here.

And if the case be so, sure there is no great self-denial in our *Psalmist* here, when he resolves to *desire nothing upon Earth in comparison of his God*: 'Tis no such glorious conquest of my Appetite to make it not pursue a present Hell, and an eternal one annex'd to it before a Saviour: Yet the World does so.

Some there are that desire Money rather; and although when *Judas* did so, this desire could not bear it self, but cast all back again; and though it did disgorge, it burst him too; the Sin it self supply'd the Law, and his guilt was his Execution. Yet this will not terrifie, men will do the like, betray a *Master*, a *Saviour*, and a *God*; onely not for so little money peradventure. Others, when the *Lord* paid his own Blood for their Redemption, yet if their wrath thirsts for his Blood that does offend them, their revenge makes their Enemies the sweeter blood, though their own Soul bleed to death in his stream. To others the deservings of the Partner of an unclean moment, are much greater than all that the *Lord Jesus* knew to merit at their hands or purchase for them. And it is no wonder they are so ungrateful to their Saviour, when they are so barbarous to themselves, as to choose not to have present Divine Possessions rather than not suffer the vengeance of their own Appetites; choose meerly to desire here, though that be to do what they do in *Hell*, rather than *have in Heaven*. O thou my Soul! if thou wilt needs desire, propose at least some satisfaction to thy Appetite, do not covet onely needs thirst for a fever, and desire meerly to inflame desire and Torments: But seek there where all thy wants will find an infinite happy supply, even in thy Saviour; covet the riches of his Grace and Goodness, thirst for the fountain opened for transgression, for the waters of the well of Life, desire him that is the desire of all Nations; yet why should we desire even him? when we have him in Heaven, and we have nothing upon Earth left to desire, but that God who hath exalted him unto his Kingdom in Heaven, would in his due time exalt us also to the same place, whither our Saviour Christ is gone before. To whom, &c.

Rom. ii. 4.
Ephes. i. 7.
Zech. xiii. 1.
Hagg. ii. 7.

The Seventh
SERMON,
 Preached at
WHITE-HALL.

Third Wednesday in LENT, 166 $\frac{3}{4}$.

MARK I. 3.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord.



Shall not break this single short Command asunder into Parts, but shall instead of doing that observe *three Advents* of our Saviour in this Life, before that last to Judgment: For each of which as it must concern us, there must be preparation made by us. In pressing which I do not mean to urge you to do that which none but God can do;

It is not in man to direct his own ways, much less Jer. x. 23.
the Lords; The very preparations of the Heart are Prov. xvi. 1.

from him. Therefore supposing the preventings of his Graces, I shall subjoyn, that the Comporting with those graces, the using of his strengths to the rooting out of our selves all averſation to Virtue, and all love of Vice; and planting other inclinations, even Resolutions of good life, is the onely thing that can make way for Christ and for his benefits.

Now of those Advents, the

First was, when he came Commission'd by God to reveal his Will, to propose the Gospel to our belief, the coming of *Christ* as a *Prophet*, which particularly is intended in the Text. *The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus* ver. 1, 2, 3.
Christ, as it is written, prepare ye the way of the Lord. The

Second was, that coming which the Prophet *Isay* did foresee, and in the astonishment of Vision ask'd, *Who is this that comes from Edom?* Isay lxiii. 1, 2.
with dy'd garments from Bozrah, travelling in the greatness of his Strength?
Why is he red in his Apparel, and his garments like him that treadeth in the Wine-fat? And it was the Prospect of him when he came to tread the *Wine-press of the Wrath of God*, to Sacrifice himself for us upon the Cross, his coming as a *Priest*. The

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Third

Third is, when he comes to visit for Iniquity, coming coercively as a King with his Iron Rod, to execute his threats on the rebellious; those that will not have him reign over them: This coming also was considered in my Text; for in the parallel place of S. Matth. it is said, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, for this is he of whom it was spoken by the Prophet Isaias, saying, the Voice of one crying in the Wilderneys, prepare ye the way of the Lord.*

For each of these in order, I shall shew you what prepares his way, beginning with the first, His coming as a Prophet, appearing in the World to reveal his Fathers' Will, the Gospel.

Now the Preparative for this Appearance is discovered easily; we find both in this Chapter, and the parallel places, that John came to make way for it by the Baptism and Preaching of Repentance; and it was Prophecied of him, that he should go before him in the Spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the Fathers with the Children, and the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just, (to the minding of just things) so to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, Luke i. 17. And this is a preparative so necessary, that the Nation of the Jews affirm, it is merely for the want of this that he does yet defer his coming: And though the appointed time for it be past, yet because of their sinfulness and impenitence he does not appear; adding *If Israel Repent but one day presently the Messias cometh.* And it is thus far true, that though it hindered not his coming, yet it hindered his receiving; although it did not make him stay, it made him be refus'd. I may lay all down in this Proposition.

Talm. Hierof.
Jaanith. f. 64.
1.

Where there is not the preparation of Repentance, where there are not inclinations and desires for Virtue; if Christ come with the glad tidings of the Gospel, He is sure to be rejected, his Religion disbeliev'd.

If the Word of the Son of God might be taken in his own case, this would be soon evinc'd, for when *He came unto his own*, they were so far from preparing his way, that they received him not, but did reject and would not entertain him as one sent from God; of all this he onely gives this account, that he found no other opposition but from vicious humours. John viii. 43, 44, 45. *Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot bear my Word: Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; and because I tell you the truth ye believe me not.* As if he should have said; the reason why you do not regard me or my Doctrine, but reject us both, is not because my Doctrine hath not means to convince your understandings, but 'tis not agreeable to your inclinations: The Works that I have done to make my person be received, and my Words credible, are such as no heart how hard or blind soever can withstand; but the Doctrine I bring along is most unwelcome, ye cannot abide to hear it. Now as he that shuts his Eyes, or turns away his Face because he hates to look upon an object, may not see it though it be all cloath'd with day; as visible as Sunshine; so your blindness proceeds hence that ye hate the light because your deeds are evil. Neither do you love to hear that which you have no mind to practise; and you will not be persuaded to believe that is your necessary duty, which you are not willing to perform; but will rather choose to think I do my Works by a confederacy with Belzebub the Prince of Devils; although it be apparent that those Lusts which you will do, and which my Works and Do-

ctrine

ctrine come to drive out of the World, they are *Lusts of the Devil*; and I, because I tell you the truth, truth I confess somewhat severe, and not so agreeable, therefore you will not believe me.

And is it not strange when nothing can be acceptable to the Understanding but as it hath appearance of Truth, and when Truth comes with evidence and demonstration, though it be but speculative useless truth, yet it does seize and force assent, that yet Christ's truths, which did not want conviction, for they came to them with that infallibility which Miracles can give, should be therefore not believ'd because they were truths? not strange at all: for his truths were not for their turns, nor humours.

And therefore he says to them, *Mat. xxi. 32, Ye repented not that ye might believe them.* As if they assented not with their Understandings but their Appetites: And we our selves have seen too much unhappy evidence of men, whom *Libertinism* hath made *Antimonians*, whom a desire of being loose from duty hath made *Solifidians*, of them whom *sensuality* hath made *Atheists*; men that become Profelytes to their Lusts; the converts of their base affections.

And we cannot expect it should be otherwise. For certainly that men who are averse to the duties of Christianity, and cannot bend their minds to the observance of that which Christs commands, should not care to believe they are his Precepts or their duty is but very natural, they were unwise should they do otherwise, it being far more reasonable to deny the duty and obligation, than granting both, to trample on that obligation which they do acknowledg, and to renounce that Duty which they do confess. Is it not far more prudent to believe that there is not a God that does regard our foolish actions here below, (which are not more worthy or more likely to enter into his considerations, than the buzzings of flies into the notices and observations of a Statesman;) than if we do believe one does severely mark, will take a strict account of, execute a vengeance for them, yet not incline our minds to leave them? if we did suffer this belief to creep into our minds, to lie close unto our hearts, sure it would fret off our averfness to Piety and inclinations to sin; we durst not entertain them both together, these thoughts would prove very ill company; they would distract and tear the mind, our Souls would tremble and disjoint, and we be sure to put one of them off.

Covetous and Adulterous Felix when he began to think that S. Paul's Sermon of a Judgment to come might be true, straight he began to shake, and then immediately to turn the Sermon off, *bid S. Paul depart till another time.* Nor can there any other reason be assigned for this; for in the Systeme of Christs Religion there is not any thing but is so suited to the very Constitution of a natural being, that the Soul would instantly imbrace and suck in, if the prepossessions of Vices, which the mind will not resolve to part with and repent of, did not infect, taint the Palate with prejudices, did not keep out the belief. For the morality which it injoyns did long before the birth of this Religion make its way into the Tenents and the Faith of every Sect of whole Mankind, it broke through all the oppositions of corrupted Nature and deprav'd Habits; nor could all the Devils arts (who then govern'd the World) stifle or quench the Light of Reason, which through all that darkness did discover such deformity in Vice, such strict agreement betwixt that which we call Virtue,

and a rational Creature, that they accounted it, and truly, the essential duty of his nature; he that was wicked was reputed false to his own being; as great an aberration from, and contradiction to Nature, as an *Animal* that were *insensible*, or as *cold fire*.

In this all the most distant Factions conspir'd in despite of Principles. The *Stoick*, who by fettering all Events, all Consultations and Designs in the lines of inexorable Destiny does seem to make all Virtue worthless, all endeavours towards it useless, yet requires it with as strict necessity as his Fate prescribes with; his reasons are as ineluctable as her Laws. Nay he does seem to break his *Adamantine Chain*, to make way for this *Chain of Virtues*, though his *Jupiter* were bound by that, yet for the sake of these he leaves *τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῶν*, our appetites, and actions in our power, *ὅτι ὅτι γινώσκου ἀναγκάζεσθαι ὑπ' ἄλλων, ὅτι καλύπτου*, that so there may be place for doing well while it is in our choice, and we are free to do it. And on the other side, the greatest enemies to their necessity and to choice too, the Sect that made all actions and things in the whole World to be, not effects of any Agent that intended them, but merely *sports of Chance and matter*; who taught that their own souls were but the concretion of some Atoms casually met together without any direction and to no end; yet the great Master of it in his *Ethicks* would not suffer any of this blind Contingency to have to do in Humane actions, regulating them by strictest Rules and Laws, and in plain contradiction to his Tenents (from which our Age derives the most of their impiety) although he held there was no God look'd on, nor after-life attended, none that did see, or would reward or punish any of his actions, yet requires highest Virtue, yea, and liv'd such too they say. In a word, many of them rais'd Morality to such a pitch, as if it had arriv'd at the same heights from whence our Christian Revelation did pretend to come. And there is nothing so peculiar to Christs Doctrine in the points of Morality, but you may find it recommended by the Heathen as a thing which no external obligation did impose, but the Law of their making did prescribe, which they read in themselves, and Christian Morality is but a fairer and more perfect Copy of the impressions of Reason on our Soul, clear'd from the blurs and defects which they had been tainted with; but *Naturales Tabule* Natures Decalogue, wrote by the Finger of the Lord: So that to quarrel with Christ for requiring it, is the same thing as to be angry with our Saviour because *the nature of the Fire is such as does require that it should burn*. Nay many of them were so sensible of the unhappy state of their Corruption, found so great pressures in themselves from the weights of their vicious inclinations, discerned so perfect an antipathy betwixt their being and their actions, that when with all the arts of Reason and the practice of their Philosophy they could not ease themselves, they went to *Sorcery and Magick* for a Cure, receiv'd Catharticks, and a discipline of purity from Hell, the Region of uncleanness; the Devil making them believe he would assist in casting out himself: Such were the stress, the restlessness, the groans, the cry of Nature to be rid of its impurity. These poor Souls were mistaken in their Method; but if the Devil by those worships of his which they were us'd to, had not stop'd the avenues, sure one would judg they had prepar'd the way for Christianity; there being no obstruction to it, nothing that can hinder its acceptance, but the low esteem and averfation of Virtue: For if men believe the

the Moral truths, they have no reason in the world to doubt the Supernatural, these being intended for the most part as encouragements to those other, as God's last attempts to kindle in us love of Virtue by such strong incentives; that, that wherein *Philosophy* was ignorant, and the *Law* weak, as having neither Promises nor Terrors equal to the force of our Corruptions, that the *Gospel* might effect, as having both to the utmost possibility of Divine Contrivance: Now this requires us to believe those Supernaturals mostly for this reason, by believing them to make us perform what it enjoyns. And it is apparent that because men would not do this, therefore they will not believe those. Shew me but any one that is sincere and strict in Christian duties that does doubt the Principles; if there be such an one he cannot doubt them long, not onely for *Christ's* Promise sake, *If any man will do my Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God*, he will soon know that Doctrine is from God that does prescribe such Godlike lives; nor onely for the *Churches* judgment, which did make *Synefius* a Christian Bishop before he did believe the Resurrection, upon that confidence they had of him by reason of his Piety: But in reason why should he that does embrace the Piety, disbelieve that which was propos'd to his belief only to urge him to embrace, only to crown that Piety? Indeed he that accounts his Vices but sleight tricks of wit, or folly; onely pleasant satisfactions to the desires of his Nature; (for he understands no nature but his carnal one) he hath no reason to believe there was a Passion of the Son of God, *by making him a Sacrifice for sin so to condemn sin in the flesh*; is not prepar'd to think that there is an Eternal weight of Indignation due and ready for it. He that hath but mean thoughts of Virtue, counts it onely *pedantry*, or as it were the *Flatus of the Mind*, making the *Soul Hypochondriack*, it is impossible that he should think God was *Incarnated* and *died* to teach it by his Doctrine and Example, and to purchase graces to enable us to live it; or that there is a Resurrection to reward it, a Trinity engag'd in working out Salvation for it. I must confess I would believe, that men persuade themselves that the reason of their disbelief is onely this, that these things are not testified sufficiently; because I find *the Man in Hell would have one sent to his Brethren from the Dead, to testifie unto them of that place of Torments*, Luke xvi, 28. as if those Truths did want witnessing. But this is not because enough hath not been done for their conviction in the truth of *Christ's* Religion; for there is hardly any thing besides in the whole World that men believe, but they believe upon less grounds. The whole World was convinc'd in such a manner, as that millions chose to die rather than not confess it; that many Ages prov'd but Centuries of Martyrdom unto that Truth; all Torments were more eligible than the belief of this Religion, which was confirmed so, that against all arts and power of Opposition, against the Wit and Fury of the World, though all the Subtlety, and all the Strength of Earth resisted it, yet it over-spread the Universe. Besides it is most prudent to believe it too, for *if there be another World what then?* There was enough done therefore; but Corruptions suffer them not to attend to that which hath been done. And 'tis no wonder they should do so at this distance, for they contrasted with *Christ's* Miracles when present; and they were so uneasy under the conviction of them, that rather than be prest so by the mighty power of his Works, they did design to rid themselves of him that wrought them,

John vii. 17.

Rom. viii. 3.

Luke xvi. 31.

1 Pet. ii. 10.

them, *John xi. 47.* you may find them struggling with his demonstrations to keep off the Evidence, *What do we? for this man doth many Miracles.* Yea, they do conspire against the Miracles themselves, and would put *Lazarus* also to death, because he was raised from the dead; they could not let the Evidence and the Conviction live, but they must murder that too. Nay more, as if the pertinacy of their prejudices could do mightier Works than Christ, and could controul, and were above the power of his Miracles, it is said to have bound his hands, and *he could do no mighty Works at Nazareth because of it,* Mar. vi. 6. At least as faith *Theophylact*, ἐκ ἡδυσίας το, ἀντι τῶ ἐκ ἐνεδέχεται, he could not do them where men were not capable they should be done. So that Christ did pronounce from Reason and Experience, *If they believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.* Such an amazing argument might probably astonish, but would not convince, unless it met with honest inclinations; for after the surprize of it were over and had vanish'd, then the corruption that Bosom Sophister, would stir, and goad, and urge incessantly; so that to ease himself, the Man must find out some cross Scruple to weaken the force of that Evidence, and the Conviction would vanish like the Ghost. And if we should examine the Experience of our selves and others, we should find that just according to the rate of virtuous inclinations and dispositions of heart to part with sin, so are men prepar'd for the belief of Christ; so are their cares and regards of his Religion: He that is honestly inclin'd opens his Soul to Christianity, for it speaks to his heart, 'tis right to the grain of his Soul, he looks upon the Promises as made to him, and lays them up as Gods encouragements of his inclinations, every thing in the Gospel fits the temper of his mind. And he that is but pretty well disposed, that loves Virtue for the most part, but does allow himself some one corruption, he always hearkens to Religion where it sets it self against those Vices, which he hates, but as to his own particular evil inclination there he is a little Infidel, cannot persuade himself that God will be so stern against a single pleasure, that one petty indulgence should be so considerable, that it should provoke to those extremities the Bible threatens; and can by no means believe *S. James, that he that offends in one point thus, is guilty of all.* And they upon whose constitutions there are weights and Plummets, that incline them to some vicious courses, and by loose Education have those pronenesses of temper pamper'd; and by having their inclinations follow'd and indulg'd taught them to crave, then to get head and to command; and then by conversation with others that mind nothing but satisfaction of those bents of the Brute part, that allow themselves all the desires of constitution, are come to swill the pleasures, profits, and the Honours that do wait on those practices: Or whosoever by whatever steps arrive at an habit of doing thus, and a great liking of them, and so to improbity of Heart, to utter averfations of the strictnesses of Piety, all which they have lived so out of: 'Tis known that not enduring to be bound up in those narrow paths of Piety and Virtue, they burst all the Obligations to them; seek little things to cavil at, or to deride, hoping with those their poison'd Arrows, through the skirts, and the Extremer parts to send a Wound into the very Vitals of Religion; for they aim at the Heart, when they pretend to strike only the out Lap of its Garments; and to say all at once, grow down-right *Atheists.* And

And though as once at *Corinth*, now again *the World by Wisdom knows no God*; there being Skill and Manage in this Mystery of Infidelity, and it requires Study, Wit, and Parts; yet they proceed just by the Method of King *David's Fool*, first, *he says in his heart there is no God*, before he say it in his thoughts and Opinions: He wishes it, and so comes to believe it, the *Atheism* is rooted in the *Seat of the Affections*, and it branches thence into the *Mind*, at least into the *Mouth*, and finding Hell the greatest check to their Delights, which they cannot determine with themselves to leave and to repent of; therefore because they will not quench it with their tears, they study how to put it out with Arguments: And meely for this reason, that they will not live like Men, they resolve therefore to believe that they shall die like Beasts. But alas! they must live for ever with the *Devil and his Angels*, if that *Christ*, whom they reject, does not lay hold on them, and rescue them from thence as he is in his passage to his *Cross*, the next Way we must prepare for him; and my next Part.

The Solemn days approaching will discover to you this Way, namely, the Passage from the Garden in *Gethsemane* to *Calvary*; There you will see he does begin his Journey with the Amazements of an Agony, and ended it in something like the horrors and the outcries of Despair; he travailed under such a load as made his life gush out through all the parts of his whole Body, the weight of it did make his Soul faint by the way; and when he was upon the Tree, crush'd it out, and made it expire sooner than the stress of Nature would have done, and forc'd it to burst out away in Prayers and strong Cries, that so he might sooner escape from under that sad pressure. And then do but consider and look on him under that representation which *S. Paul* does shew of him, how all that time that he was creeping under that dire burden in that dolorous way, he was meely pressing on with all the haste he could to overtake us in our course, and rescue us from Ruine. For that Journey was a Race, and we the Prize. *καπλήθην*, I have been laid hold on, saith he, *Phil. iii. 12.* laid hold on in the *Agonistick* sense, as in a Race, he so expresses it: And that he was laid hold on by these sufferings, the Epistle to the *Hebrews* does evince; *καταδιώξας κατάλαβε*, saith *Crysostome*, in that Way he pursued me till he catch'd me; his Agony was but his strife to overtake me, his Sweat the issue of his Race: When he came down from Godhead in his Incarnation, he pursued us then into our nature, he laid hold of our *Flesh*, and followed us from Heaven to the lowest parts of the Earth. But when he went thus to his Cross here, he pursued us then into our *guilts*, he laid hold of our *sins*, and took them up and bore them on the Tree, then he descended into Hell to follow us. This as it was formally done once for all, so in its virtue, influence, and blest effects, 'tis still in doing, as to thee, and me, and all of us; and the approaching season is to represent it so. Now sure we need no motives to prepare the way for him who runs that he may obtain our Salvation, who though he laboured under such a dismal burden, yet still presses on to catch us, so to rescue us from sin and Hell: If he think fit, and can endure to strive thus, I will make all ready, and stand fair to have my guilt seized from me, and to be laid hold on for my Blessedness, to be the Prize, the Crown of all *Christ's Agonies*, that which he thinks worthy with so much struggling to contend for.

Now

Now the same Preparation is required here, that made way for his other coming, that is, Repentance, in one word, a disposition and sincere desire of heart to part with every evil and corrupt affection, to quit every sin. Sin lying in the way made it so dreadful, God *laid upon him the iniquity of us all*, and that weight threw him prostrate on the Earth, and sunk him into *Adns*: And yet if any were more galling, 'twas the weight of those that were clog'd with Impenitence, this was more heavy, more afflictive to him than his Cross. To bewail this and the issues of it he left off to consider his own Sufferings and required others also to do so, *Weep not for me, weep for your selves*. And sure it was for want of such Tears to dilute and temper his sad Potion that his Cup was so amazing to him: It was for this the Angel that came from Gods presence to comfort him, left him still in Agonies, could not do it, because the joyes and comforts of that presence are at Sinners that Repent, *Luke xv. 10*. And God himself in *Hoseah* seeing *Ephraim* would not reform cries out, *נחם* *Consolatio abscondita est ab oculis meis: Comfort is hidden from mine Eyes*; so the *LXX* also. Now they that refuse to do themselves this Honour that the Angel could not do, to comfort their God in his Agony, how will he *ease himself on them*? How will he *laugh at their Calamity*? be comforted in their Destruction at his coming as a King in Executions? the next *Way* that we must *prepare*, and my last Part.

Luke xxiii. 28.

Luke xxii. 43,
44.

Hos. xiii. 14.
Isai. i. 24.
Prov. i. 26.

Isai. xxviii. 21.

Heb. xi. 1.

2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

A Progress this, I confess, that is not usual to our King, nor is according to the Method of his Government: God call'd it his *strange Work* under the Law, and much more is it so under the Gospel, when he Governs by the Law of Faith: For *Faith being the evidence of things not seen*, shews us Rewards and Punishments not present, but at distance, out of sight, in the World to come, to keep us in our Duty. And then why should the *Ax be now laid to the root of the Tree*? when as there is to be an universal Conflagration, *where every Tree that beareth not good Fruit shall be cast in*? And upon this we see events do not discriminate desertings, things happen to the good and bad alike; we may have *seen the wicked in great Power, spreading himself like a green Bay-tree*; like a triumphal Garland, as he were all Ensign of Victory, all verdant spreading Conquest. Yea, and when *the Ax is at the root of the Tree*, we know not whether it designs it for the *Temple* or the *Kitchen*, to make a *Fire*, or to make a *God*. The Day that cometh shall declare all, when the delay both of Rewards and Punishments shall be compensated with interest: And it does scarce seem equal to inflict them twice. But yet *O Lord!* in days when *Scoffers* appear: *that walk after their own lusts, and say, where is the promise of his coming*? For except that the Fathers fell asleep, some men are dead and others risen in their place, all things else continue as they were from the beginning, there always were vicissitudes of Flourish and Decay in every Nation, and in these things there are no footsteps of a Providence or Judgment: In days when men resist and deny thy Hand because they do not feel it; and since thy Judgments are removed out of their sight, despise Thee too, and dash thy self out of the World; in such days 'tis but just that thou shouldst come to their conviction, and confute them with thy Judgments into Ruine. And truly since it must be horrid provocation that makes him come beyond the compass of his Covenant to Revenge, the Executions are mostly very fatal, as if they were what they seem to prevent, the last Day,
and

and the final Doom upon such Nations. For to the Jews they look as if they had fulfilled all that the Prophecy was mistaken to foretel, and were as irreverfible and utter as the Sentence of the Day of Judgment.

Now to prepare for fuch Approaches of the Lord our King, there is one onely means, that is, refolving Fealty and Allegiance to him, and that not formal onely, or but idle Homage, but renouncing all Confederacy with his Enomies, Sin, and the Devil, and ferving him with all the heart and all the ftrength. For he is that King in the 19. of S. Luke, who did not onely caufe his contumacious Enemies, *ſuch as would not have him to reign over them* to be ſlain before him, *Jo. 2.7.* making his way over their Necks whoſe Hearts he could not ſet up his Throne in; nor did onely caufe thoſe Servants who were ſo far from preparing his Way, that upon confidence *he delay'd his coming they ſmote their fellow Servants, and did eat and drink with the drunken;* were unjuſt to others, and indulg'd themſelves in all licentious living, caufe them to be cut aſunder, and to have their portion in the Region of weeping, where theſe intemperate ſhould have onely tears to drink, and for their Riots onely gnawing of teeth, Teeth ready to revenge their former Luxuries on themſelves, gnawing as to devour one another, *Matth. xxiv. 48.* But he is that King too that Executed Sloth as well as Treason, in *Matth. xxv. 30.* who having given one a Talent, truſted him with abilities of doing ſervice in the ſtation he had put him in, which for his not endeavouring to do, though he corrupted not his faculties, becauſe he buried them and did not uſe them, but indulg'd to idleneſs, condemn'd him therefore to utter darkneſs, to the proper Manſion of the ſlothful, all whoſe time can be nothing but night, ſince his whole Life is but as ſleep. But in a word, S. Matthew hath ſaid all, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand; as it is written, prepare ye the way of the Lord*

And here to ſtop, and to reflect at once upon our ſelves and this which hath been ſaid: And firſt, on this laſt way by which he comes as a King in Executions.

Here I cannot but take notice, that we have ſome that do deſign and act among us as if they were *this King's Harbingers*, his Pioneers rather, to prepare the way for his invaſion on us; or were his *ſorlorn hope* ſent out to give the onſet of his Executions, and were ſure of Him in the *reſerve* to ſecond them: Truly their Threats and their Attempts are big and Insolent, and moſt mens expectations are not very comfortable.

To ſay with ſome, this Confidence of theirs is built on the non-execution of the Laws (which ſeems ſlighter than in the old Compariſon of Cobwebs) for notwithstanding their fine cloſe contexture, there are holes left for Spiders to creep through; and not the great Flies onely, every ruffling and befriended Sinner whether by his Money or Relations, but the leſſer too, now they have learn'd to fly in Swarms, break through, to ſay that were a Complaint out of my ſphere.

And truly when I think on the temper of their fury, how it is hardened in the fire of Execution, charges Death not onely in the Field, but on the Scaffold too; I muſt needs think it hath ſome ſtronger Ingredients, and there is ſomething of Religion in it.

Now really there can be nothing elſe of that but an opinion of the great defection of Vertue in their Enemies: Open Prophaneſs, publique

Licence, living without fear of God or Man, makes them look upon them as men designed for excision. *Achior* is said to give this counsel to the Captain of the Host of *Babel*, when he went against *Judæa*.

Judith. v. 20,
2.

My Lord and Governour, If there be any Error in this People, and they sin against their God, let us consider that this shall be their Ruin, and let us go up and we shall overcome them: But if there be no iniquity in the Nation, let now my Lord pass by, lest the Lord defend them, and their God be for them, and we become a Reproach before all the World. And sure that they who when they were a formidable Body, furnish'd with Principles as bad as now they can be, and with Weapons too; and flesh'd with Victories and mischief, should at once depart from these advantages, quietly lay them down and all their Interests; and now when they are scattered and disfurnish'd, destitute of every strength but what our selves afford them, that they should make Attempts which no Courage can sustain, nor Reason countenance; all this I say, admits of no account but this, that they who were amazed at Gods exertings of himself, when they saw him appear so visibly on our behalf, and look'd upon us as a party purified in the Furnace of Affliction, and the dross and scum gone out of us; (for we had some Reputation then:) Now seeing the return we make to God, as we had been delivered to commit Abominations, they are grown confident God is engag'd against us, that we have fill'd up our measure, have been Fatted for a Sacrifice and are ripe to bleed: And if our supineness give them Weapons, and our iniquities give them Courage, there are enough will count our slaughter an *Obligation to the Lord*. O! give me leave to contradict the Counsel of my Text, *prepare Not this way of the Lord*, do not thus make ready for his coming by provoking him to hasten it in Fury; rather Block up all Passages and stop his March; you have wherewith at hand; The duties you are now practising, those of this Season, *Humiliation* and *Amendment*, are Barricades strong enough against him, he cannot break through them. He had sent out his Executions against *Israel*, and *Ahab* did but Fast and put on Sackcloth and they straight retired, were beat off for a whole Life, *Sceft thou how Ahab humbleth himself? because he humbleth himself I will not bring the evil in his days.* The habit of Repentance, if Piety and Vertue get but Countenance, it will divert him in his March; and it must needs, for it prepares his other way, that to the place of *Expiations*, to the *Throne of Grace*, his *Cross*; the Second thing

1 King. xxi. 29.

And should we not prepare his Way to that by our Repentance, we were false to our own actions that pretend to do it, unjust to the time that calls for it, but most unkind to Christ and to our Souls.

What in that fatal Race, and under all that load he did stretch and press on so to lay hold upon us, to seize our sins and Sacrifice them in himself, that then we should retain them, should not let him have them, but cling to them still; that when he was upon the Cross with naked Breast and open Arms, as it were ready to receive all wounds sin could inflict, and every wickedness of ours had a stab at his Heart, that we should still reserve the envenom'd Ponyard, keep the malice of the wickedness to Crucifie Him to our selves afresh, and kill our selves also for ever! That we should suffer him to swoon and Die under the burden of our guilt, yet we our selves resolve to keep and not to quit the guilt! For do not you deceive your selves, Christ did not take away the guilt of any

one

one sin, from any man that does not part with it, but still retains the sin; that would imply a contradiction: Such men are so far from preparing the Lords way to his Crofs, that that whole Journey was to them in vain: They will not let him have their sins to bear upon the Tree, deny their Priest a Sacrifice for them when he was going to the Altar.

Indeed they that come to the Celebration of his Passion thus dispos'd, plant troubles in his way to his Crofs, and make it more grievous; yea they obstruct his passage thither even when they wait upon him to it: Those that come with indevotion to attend that sad Proceffion, such as they usually go to their Prayers with; these are so far from making his Way smooth and easie, that 'tis they that throw him in that Journey prostrate on his Face, and cast him into Agonies of Prayer, so to expiate and instruct their little sense of that to which such Sufferings were due, and which must have such deprecations. They that come thither with their swelling scornful Prides and their Ambitions, lay Hills in his way, and when he is so heavy laden and so weak, they make him climb up Precipices, whence their Scorns too throw him down again with his Crofs and Incumbrances upon him. All these heights must be levell'd and *the Mountains be brought low*, if we prepare the way for him. The Gaudy people, they that spend the severe hours of this sad Season, and of the preparation for that Passion in the Arts and labours of Attire, that mortifie and punish themselves onely in cares and in Contrivances to make and dress up Beauties, and the study of these enters with, thrusts out the grand concerns of their own Souls, and the employments of this time, even which they are about: These doubtless are attir'd in Funeral conformity to wait upon him to his Crofs, on which he had no other dress but the rags of his own Skin: Come they not rather to expose his nakedness, and shame him from themselves, that so he may go by and not take notice of them in his passage, nor be concern'd for them in his Sufferings? The Hypocrites either to God or to their Brethren, that have onely the Ceremonies, the Civilities of Honesty of Religion, make shew of both, but yet are false to God, and insincere with Man, cruelly betraying or deluding, yea enraging those necessities which with fair speeches they pretend to smooth and false; they act over again the treacherous malice of his Persecutors, who under the kindness of the Cup of Consolation which was given to them that were condemn'd to Die, namely, *Wine mingled with Myrrhe* to chear the Heart and cloud the Understanding, and so lessen sense of Suffering, in scorn and mischief gave him *Vinegar and Gall*, which though it counterfeits the other taste, serves onely to prolong life for more future Torment. The Swearer stabs him all along his Journey; and the Men of Black Designs and Malice, they pour Venom in those Wounds.

But why stand I thus to enumerate particulars? All such come not to the Redemption of the Day, but onely to the Scene: Amidst other like Entertainments of this Holy severe Time which the Theater affords, they come also to see the *Tragedy of Jesus*, to behold the dead march to *Golgotha*, indifferent and unconcern'd in that (as in the rest) whether there were such a procession in earnest, or whether he did come at all indeed; which casts me on his other coming, the last thing, his coming in the first Revealing of the Gospel.

Luke x. 18.

Voyages of
Mendez Pinto,
Chap. 19.

And here I hope I shall have no reflections to make as to preparing for this coming. Christ certainly did find his Way prepared so to this Nation, that we believe he was more early entertain'd in it, than almost any where in the whole *Gentile World*: And ever since his cares for it were so particular, that they, who would fulfil the Revelation in this Church, seem to err with some reason, when as his regards were so peculiar for this, as if he had not concern'd himself in any other. And sure none other ever had so long, such opportunities and advantages; so that I cannot press you to *prepare the Lord's Way*, since *he is among us*. *Righteous art thou O Lord!* and *wonderful in thy Mercies!* yet if I might plead with Thee concerning them, I would enquire what hast thou done here all this while after thy so long abode among us? what are we the better? The last attempt of God to reclaim Man, when he had shewed the World all other means were fruitless, was by *Thee his Son!* by whom he did convey all the full measures of his Graces; and now what effect of these is there in us? Shew me how all this care and cost hath made us be more just, sober, or chaste; in any way more virtuous than those Heathens whose Religion came from Hell? We find Thee saying, *I beheld Satan as Lightning fall from Heaven*, his Power vanishing like that which does but flash and perish, never can be recollected. But alas! that falling flash hath kindled foul heats that will break out into Fire and Brimstone. Idolatry 'tis true, is profligated hence; the Devil is not worshipped as he was with a Religion of Impieties, Uncleanesses, Drunkenness, and the like: But yet the same things are now made to consist with thy Religion, as well as with that of the Devil, and we can do all those things and be Christians. Some, as if their Profession were a Charm which made them shot-free from Gods threats do they what they will, they will adventure any the most desperate Impiety and choose Damnation in a sin, and yet believe, be confident, and so secure. On others it does work indeed the *Form of Godliness*, makes them such perfect *Pageants of Religion*, that they oft fall in love with their own *Vizour*, and please themselves as if their dress were *Nature*, while yet under that form there are the greatest falsenesses, and black treacherous designs, the most unjust and Bloody practices that even make the *Form of Godliness* look dismal; and yet all this joyned with so much *superciliousness*, with such difference to Christ, that you would say the Pharisees were now all of Christ's side. And is this all the Lord came hither for? to be a Sanctuary for the prophane, a Cloak for Hypocrites? Give me leave to relate a Story I have read of four or five Vessels of Portugals who were Shipwrack'd to the drowning of almost five hundred men, onely fifty three escaped, and they were left naked and hurt upon an Island Desolate, as the *Israelites Wilderness*, which needed the same Miracle to sustain them, and found the like: For God as it were rained Fish upon them; and so did that which kept them alive, till at last they espyed a large Boat of Chineses making to the shore to take in Water in that Island, and the people coming all to Land for their refreshment; which they seeing, resolved to make themselves the Masters of their Boat and Goods, and go away in it: A man would have thought their own sad state in that Land of Desolation should have taught them Compassion; at least Gods Mercies to them should have taught them Justice to others. But when men have received great signal instances of Gods Protecting mercies, they think then that

that they are his Favourites, and then they may do any thing: *They therefore got into a Wood near the Shore and Boat, and it was ordered among them, that when the Captain should pronounce Jesus three times, then they should run out of the Wood and seize the Vessel.*

Lord! would not such a word be a Spell and Charm against unmerciful, inhumane, and unjust Designs? would it not exorcize all impious Contrivances? It is no new thing to preface mischief with an holy Name, and bring in Jesus in the Prologue to Iniquity; to talk of God and act the Devil. *They seiz'd it, and driving from the Land, left the true Owners of the Vessel to possess their misery; Being secure, they search'd and found no person in it but a Child of thirteen years of age, and they fell to what Victuals they met, and having eaten, with hands lifted up they praised God solemnly, and then proceeded to cut out and share the Silks and Riches of the Vessel: The Boy seeing all this, and drown'd in Tears would not be comforted by them, who promised him all friendly usage; but he desired rather to go Die with his Father than live with such wicked people: Being reprehended for that Speech, Would you know, said he, why I said it? Because I saw you when you had fill'd your Bellies praise your God with hands lift up, and yet for all that, like Hypocrites, never care for making restitution of what you have stolen, but be you sure that after Death you shall feel the rigorous Chastisement of the Lord Almighty. The Captain admiring would needs persuade him to be a Christian: Whereunto earnestly beholding him, he answered; I understand not what you mean, declare it first, and you shall know my mind: And being told by them of the blessed Authour and the purity of our Religion, what God did to Redeem us from our sins, and what holy Laws he hath left us: With Eyes and Hands lift up, he weeping, said; Blessed be thy Power O Lord! that permits such people to live on the Earth that speak so well of Thee, and yet so ill observe thy Law as these blinded Miscreants do, who think that Robbing and Preaching are things that can be acceptable to thee: And so return'd to his Tears and obstinacy.*

To see the strictness of the Christians Obligations, and the looseness of their Lives, to see their Practices dash against their Professions! 'Tis such a thing as makes them be the Scorn of honest Heathen Children. And is this all that men are required to *prepare the way of the Lord for*? Is this all he can do after so many Centuries of the abode of him and his Religion among us? While there is no more of his influence appears, I must suspect he is not here, *the Lord is not among us*, but is gone. And certainly if it be possible to drive him out, if there be any Art of doing that, we have Professors of that Mystery, and the *Drolls* are *they*. That men should sin against him by transgressing of his Laws is no wonder, for there is invitation to it in the Blood: That some did count him an Impostor is not strange, they had not met it may be, with means of Conviction, or were prepossess'd with prejudice; but while men own his Person and Religion, to have a God onely to make them sport, as it hath no temptation, so it hath no measures of its guilt: *Atheism* is an honest refuge from this Vice; it being much more sober and rational to think there is no God, than 'tis to make a mock of him whom they profess to be so. This is indeed to prepare his way to his Cross; for so the Jews and Soldiers did, they put a Scepter in his hand onely to take it out and smite him with his Scepter, they bowed the knee and cry'd
Hail

Hail King, and so humbly spit in his Face, and they put a Crown, but 'twas of *Thorns*, on his Head: thus they *Worship'd* him in scorn and *Crucify'd* him with his *Dignities*. And so we serve *Religion*: When we would have a Scene of Mirth, that must be put in a ridiculous disguise to laugh at, the *Son of God* must enter *Travesty*, and our Discourse is nothing but the *Gospel in Burlesque*. And is it not time for him to retire? But O prepare not this path for him to go away in. The Heathens thought it much more possible to Chain their Deity, than to be safe if he were gone, Any the strangest contradiction is more easie, than Security without him. Now if you but make up *S. Peter's Chain*, that will hold your God sure: Add to Faith (that's the first Link that unites us to him,) *Vertue*, and to *Vertue Temperance*, and the other Graces nam'd there. If he were going; yet *Return unto me, and I will return unto you saith the Lord*: If you do but prepare to meet him in the Duties of this Season, you are sure to find him at his Cross: and if we do but lay hold on him there, and by the mortifications of a true Repentance partake in his Death; He that is *the Way and the Life* will through that dust and ashes from that Death, make a way for us to his Eternal Life. To which, &c.

2 Pet. i. 5.

Malach. iii. 7.

The

The Eighth
SERMON,
 Preached at
WHITE-HALL.
 October 9. 1664.

I JOHN V. 4.

*This is the Victory which overcometh the World,
 even our Faith.*



These Words, though they explicitly make only one single Proposition, yet they imply several.

First, That *the State of Christianity is a state of Warfare*; He that is born of God must fight we see, for *he must overcome*; which is the

Second; In this War he must not satisfy himself with being on his Guard, defensive, looking to secure himself, but he must Assault and Conquer, nothing else will serve his turn but Victory.

Thirdly, *The Enemy* which he must have no Peace with, but must vanquish, *is the World.*

Fourthly, *Faith is sufficient forces to assist him in his Conquest.*

Fifthly, *Faith where it is rightly made use of is a certain Victory.*

But I shall not handle these in *Theſe* thus, but for the more practical treating of them shall make and answer three Enquiries.

First, What the way is that the World does wage War in? where its Strength lies? and how it manages that force so as to get advantage over men? and how it does improve each such advantage till it gets a perfect Conquest?

Secondly, What the strengths of Faith are? how it charges, breaks the forces of the World, and does enable the Believer to overcome?

Thirdly, How far the Believer must pursue his Conquest? what must be the measures of his Victory? that he may know how to vanquish it so as that the World may not rebel again; not do like *Joash* finite three times,

times, then leave, but Smite until he make an end of danger: Having answered these, I shall endeavour to apply all to our selves.

Now for the better handling of the first of these, I must shew you how the Will of Man may be ~~attagued~~ ^{attacked} and taken.

To which purpose I observe, that whatsoever liberty there is in humane choice, yet every appetite seems in some sense determin'd in its tendencies to fix on that which appears simply best for it, for that instant which it chooseth in; I do not say that whensoever Reason peremptorily concludes a thing is best that the Will is determined instantly to that; for by a too unhappy evidence we know, that if the lower Soul does but becken the *Will* another way, she can suspend and stop her prosecutions, and too oft finds cause to go along with that against the dictates of the Mind; But this I say, that in her last Executive Determinations she always tends to that which hath the fairest and most vigorous appearances of being best for her at that present time. If it seem strange how, since the Understanding can account the certain expectations of an happy everlastingness much better for the present, than a momentary worldly satisfaction; (for we have our Rules and our proportions by which we rate and choose Reversions rather than Possessions, and those of the other World exceed these beyond all the measures of proportion, and the Understanding does inform impartially of this:) How then if the *Will* can let those go and take these it can be said always to choose the better for the present? if it may be said to do so though it let those go, then by what wash or Chymick Artifices does she blanch or paint these so as to make them look better for the present? Now we may discover how these both may be, if we onely reflect upon the manner of the actings of our own Souls. Where the things that stand in competition for our choice are both of the same kind, and have one common measure of their good or ill; (as for example, are both painful, or both profitable, or delightful) and no consideration of any other motive comes into the Ballance; here the *Will* must needs choose the best, refuse the worst. For meerly out of averfation to pain to run into the stronger Pain, avoid the less; or out of Covetousness to refuse greater Wealth; or for delights sake onely to prefer that which is less delightful, are practical contradictions. Where the Objects are of different kinds, one for example, profitable or delightful, but not without sin; and the other Vertuous, and spireful Reason taking Vertues part, suggests the motives to it, Gods Commands, his Promises, and Threats; here, though the inferiour faculties prostitute all their baits, they cannot equal those proposals to the *Will* 'tis true; yet by their importunacies still pressing her, goading her by their stings, they can and do prevail with her to call the Understanding off from her attention to those other motives, and employ the thoughts upon the present Object that does importune her so, and which by the agitations it does cause within the sensual part, puts the mind in disorder presently, distracts the thoughts, then seizes them; so that the Understanding being now intent to this, the better motives are let go and sink, and then the onely ones in view are those of sense, which straight the *Will* rushes into the imbraces of, and the other being vanish'd and no better than appearing, 'tis plain in those she fixes on the best. But if the mind will not be taken off, but Conscience fly in the Man's Face and will not let him rest, nor his *Will* fix, why

why then in this unquietness of hers she sets the thoughts on work and will not let them fix till they find out some *salvo* that can satisfie Carnality and Conscience too, that will let the Man have the sin and not deprive him of Gods Favour: And if either *application of Gods Decrees and Promises without Condition* absolutely to himself, and *the assurances of Faith and trust* will do it, (as we may know it will in some) or if not that, then if *hopes of mercy, resolutions of repenting afterwards* and *leaving off* the sin, (as this does do with most) then it is evident in choosing to obey his inclinations, with such *salvo* the man chooseth that which does appear best for the present. But if the mind unsatisfied with these, and not daring to trust such rotten planks against the very face of storm, object the uncertainty, at least, of these Principles, and the unsafeness of those after-hopes, not fit to be security against God's Threats, and would convince the man that conscience of resisting a temptation, and by that keeping himself free from the clutches of the Devil, and the fears of Hell, together with present assurance of God's favour, are more satisfying at the present than the pleasures of the sin: Yet those pleasant apprehensions of the Conscience of resisting re-encountering with the seeming impossibility of resisting alway that which presses so, and will some time or other seize upon him, and finding the temptation to have sharper stings than his Religious fears of things which are not present, and of which he hath had no experience: And besides, he having never had any great sense of God's favour and rewards, the Landskip of them is but dim and faint upon the mind like those representations blind men have of Beauty (to whom if you discourse of exact features, perfect harmony of colours, of a graceful presence, chearful air, and a good mine, and all those other know not whats, that being seen commit a Rape upon mens faculties, yet his conceptions of them are but very dark, who never hath had any notices of these but such as his Ears give) and though the Understanding chance to be positive and resolute in its determinations concerning them, yet still the apprehensions of them are not clear; futurity, which is one sort of distance, making objects, as all things afar off do, look but confused, and their *Ideas* not distinct, nor bright or brisk, therefore they move the *Will* but very coldly: Whereas the other pleasure being known, the apprehensions of it are more vigorous, the draught is strong and lusty on the Fancy, there is force in every line, the very image of it lives, and therefore is more efficacious, and by that prevails, that looking fairest and most tempting at that present, so that from this experience of our selves in every sort of instance thus deduc'd, the *Will* does seem always to fix on that which appears simply best for it, for that instant which it chooseth in; the man still takes what he likes better at that present, and he likes better that which looks better for that present: And things are made to look better by these Arts which I have shewed you.

This being now the temper and the disposition of the *Will*, and such the method of her actings, this is the thing the World makes use of, here's its strength, namely, in making things look better for the present. Which how it manages so as thereby to get advantages upon us, how it does improve each such advantage till it get a perfect Conquest, I shall give you in few words; by shewing you how the World gets first possession of our Souls, and there raises in us passionate desires that expect present satisfaction, which it hath at hand to serve them with,

which by these arts are made look better than any other expectations.

It was observ'd by the Philosopher most truly, that a Child is born only an *Animal*, is to be *Educated*, and *brought up into a Man*: His reason is the birth of time and institution, for a while nothing but sense does live in him. Now all that while he is incapable of being affected with any other things, but such as strike the senses, things of this present World; and by that means only such possess his mind and inclinations too, the uses and advantages of every thing about him are those he is first sensible of, and those alone: and so the World does make the first impressions on our Souls, it does prevent all other in our inclinations, hath our first love and enjoys our first embraces, from which it must be with great reluctancy that we are torn; and whereas these impressions should be weakened and defac'd by the infusion of other Notions and Principles, and the Soul should be weaned from too great liking of these sensitive satisfactions by the cares of those which should be as *assistant souls* to us, denying us every thing that was not very requisite or very moderate, that we might learn to want them, and be taught not to desire them. The contrary alas! is practis'd every way, as soon as e're the mind is capable of being trained into the World's snares we betray it into them, we teach it how to understand and be affected with the bait, and those pomps which we but just before made them renounce, we make them before any things know, and be pleas'd with; and the first blossom of the mind wherein the Soul exerts it self for the most part is Pride: And for the rest the old complaint is true, *ante palatum eorum quam os institui-mus*, we teach their Palates sooner than their Tongues, and they can cry for what they cannot name; and yet among their first half words they can name Dainties; and what will he not lust for when he is grown up, that is taught to desire provocatives e're he can chew them? Thus we teach the gayeties and the delights of the World how to insinuate into and take the heart; we water and keep warm the seeds of Worldly Inclinations that are there, make them sprout and cherish them, nurse up original propensions into temper: And as Understanding grows up, we impregnate it with Principles and arts of serving them, turn Reason into a sagacity and skill of catering for those Inclinations, making them like *Aristotle's* observation backwards, educating them into Creatures of meer sense, teaching them to be *rational understanding Brutes*. Yet the World thinks *sic fiunt homines*, this is call'd *making them Men betimes*: And when they are thus made, when the age of satisfying all their inclinations is come, and when Temptations are understood, and multiply by Conversation, and the World hath Objects for them all at hand; Objects, that what ever way they turn their Eyes are still before them and thrust themselves into the mind and the advantages that do attend them, and by constant importunacy stir and work desires and serve them too; then we are in that state in which the World hath those advantages I told you of, whereby it does not onely war against the Principles of Reason and Religion in us, but it also leads the Will into Captivity, and enslaves her to it self. For it is plain the World hath got possession of the heart, and hath a strong party of heady passions, which whensoever a Temptation does alarm them, presently are up, raise a mutiny, and with the heat of Fancy and commotion of affections they disorder the Understanding so, that it cannot rally up considerations against the assault, but either it concludes,

concludes, or disputes very faintly: If it do make an effort and struggle, it is but with a slender company of thin weak notions of things afar off, which the man hath had no proof of, nor hath any great confidence in; which while it is in recollecting and enforcing, the World hath its powers ready, seizes on the Will by the means of a corrupted fancy that does give it earnest, foretast, even the possession of the well-known pleasures that it does invite to, and so melts him down into the sin. Now while the present Profits, Pleasures, Honours that I have from the World fill me, while they feed and cloath me, and provide me all that my necessity or wantonness can wish, and furnish me in hand with whatsoever any of my natural or my forc'd Appetites do gape for, and lull me with that constant variety of those delights which it procures, the use of which hath so drunk up my Spirits, and my Soul hath so imbib'd the joys, that I know not how to retrench from them, nor from that which is to furnish them. Must I leave all these for things that I have had no taste nor relish of? leave all in present for some future hopes which I have no great confidence of compassing if I should try? and which I also see that very few venture for? Whereas Mankind is swallowed up in the pursuit of these, and to be stor'd with them does not onely serve my needs and Luxuries, but it is the onely state of Reputation and Honour. 'Tis not from a rich stock of vertuous qualifications, nor from great and glorious Actions that Esteem and Dignities do generally grow, but from worldly advantages, these constitute conditions, and these are their onely Characters. And being it is so, they that are in a Sphere above the ordinary ranks of people, must contrive those things that are become essential to their condition; and they must have worldly Poms although with the expence of Piety, or Charity, and Justice, yea, of every Christian Duty; of Morality indeed, and Heathen vertue, of Humanity it self: They will extort, be ravenous and cruel, will be false and treacherous, cheat and betray to get, and purchase at the price of the most disingenuous, sneaking and unmanly sins: To undermine another they will dig to Hell, as if they meant to give fire to their Mine with the flames of that place whence they have the malice and the arts to do it: And as if they did not care to sink him thither who stands in their way to stop their rise; they are content to dye their purple with their own most guilty blushes, and the blood of any one that is their Rival or Competitor.

Add to this, that when these pretences of Condition have got footing in the heart, besides those passionate desires which they stir for themselves, they work out most unquiet Emulations, Envies, Discontents at others. In whatsoever any other does exceed me, his Abundance is my want, straight I am in necessity, not from my own needs, but from his possessions, and I suffer his enjoyments; I labour, fret, and sink under the burden of his Honours, and his greatness is inflicted on me. Nor can I ever be at rest till I am got from under the sad pressure of that deep necessity of having what I see another have. And thus it will be, till Ambition have no further Object, till there be no greater heights to mount. And now this Lust is in its pride, and the victorious World in its Triumphal Chariot. Not that I dare pretend that I have shewed you all the Chains by which it drags captive Souls after it, or all the Arts of Tyranny that it does execute: I could name many more, but he alone

Matth. iv. 8, 9. is able to discover all, that *in the twinkling of an Eye did once shew all the Kingdoms of the World, and all the beauty of them, and who promised to bestow them all for but one single act of Worship, and whose gift the Glories of it are for the most part, and purchased by those very means.* My business is to pull it down from this great height, and shew you how to triumph o're these Conquests; which my Text says is done by *Faith, for this is the Victory that overcometh the World even our Faith:* Which how it does, is my second next Enquiry.

It seems a prejudice to this Assertion of my Text, that the great pretenders to Faith, the men that lay the whole stress of their Everlasting Being on believing onely, have been branded to be very Worldly; and the Factions of Godliness were the mysteries and arts of Thriving; as if their *Faith* laid hold *indeed upon the Promises of this Life*, and if it *overcame the World*, it was for them to seize and be possessors of. But this is not the Victory my Text secures, a Conquest for the Faith onely of *Mahomet* to make: And while Christian Votaries do onely mind such Conquests, and are candidates of *Turcism*, do they not call it in, and make way for their Sword and their Religion? But the Faith that lays hold on Christ's Promises cannot consist with any such affections. For since Christ's Promises are made onely to those that overcome all such desires, and that do it to the end, and none other can be safe; It is impossible for him that does not overcome to trust upon those Promises, and to apply them to himself by Faith: For at once to believe I shall be saved, and yet believe those sayings which affirm none such can be saved, these are most inconsistent. It being then as easie to make contradictions be at peace, as *Faith* and *Worldliness*, they cannot suffer one the other; it follows: He that hath this Faith in sincerity must needs overcome the World. And to shew you in a word how it is done, you need not but to consider, that Faith is as *S. Paul* saith, *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1. Which as the *Syriack* translates, does say, that Faith is such a certainty of those things that we hope for, as if we actually had them; and it is the revelation of those things that are not seen, it hath so strong a confidence in God, that the Believer assures himself of all Gods Promises and Threats, as much as if they were in sight; and though *we see them through a glass but darkly*, yet we see them by it, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. it being *ἐλεγχόμενα* & *βλεπομένων*. It represents the things of which we have no demonstration from Sense or humane reasoning, as convincingly to the mind as if they were before our Eyes: And it is *ὑπόστασις*, the substance, the subsistence and the very being of things that are not yet in being, but in hope: So that the Eye of Faith, like that of God, does see those things that are invisible, and futurity is present to it. Now by this alone it is of force to break the powers of the World, which as we saw while the things of the other World were look'd upon as at a great distance, afar off, taking advantage of their absence storm'd the mind with present forces, and had supplies at hand for fresh assaults, so overcame it. Whereas, had the powers of the World to come been present (now by Faith they are made so we see) the other which are so inferiour that there is no more comparison than of immensity to a point, a moment to Eternity, could not stand before them. 'Tis too notorious that this is the case: For should a man cry fire in the House, how it had seiz'd the strengths of

of it, were blotting out the glories of it in thick Smoak, devouring all their shine in flame, we would leave our Devotions, our most eager pleasures to prevent this, and no speed were swift enough to serve our cares and fears. But though a Prophet of the Lord cry *Tophet is prepared, the pile thereof is Fire and much Wood, and the Breath of the Lord like a stream of Brimstone kindling it,* and do this till his Lungs crack, not one heart is mov'd, nor brings a drop of tear to quench the flame, because these fires are not present as the other, neither have men any sense of them, were they alike convincing, alike present to the apprehension. 'twere impossible according to what we have demonstrated (that the Will in her choices and her averfations, where the Objects are of alike kind, and have one common measure of their good and evil, is determin'd to avoid or take that which appears the greatest always; 'twere I say impossible) not to fly these which the *Devils do believe and tremble* James ii. 19. at, with greater dread wherever they appear: Now a strong lively Faith must paint them out and shew them in each sin the World insnares into. Neither would any of those rotten planks, which, while the Will does fluctuate betwixt her worldly inclinations and these fears, and is toss'd about, offer themselves, as I declared to you, for her to escape upon, though she does dash her self upon God's Threats choosing the present sin; such as the *application of Decrees or Promises made absolutely to himself without any condition, confidence in Gods Mercies, hopes of Pardon*; none of these would be security to one that were convinc'd in earnest. He that did believe and as it were discern that height which his ambition goads him to aspire to, were upon the brink of the bottomless Pit, whither when he arriv'd, that very sin that tempts him with the glories of the prospect, would then tumble him down headlong into that Abyss, he would no more dare to ascend it by such false and guilty steps upon such hopes of mercy, trusts on Promises or Decrees, than he would dare to throw himself off from a Pinnacle in confidence God was *Almighty and Almerciful, able enough, and kind enough to stretch out his right hand and catch him in the fall, or trusting to that Promise, He will give his Angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone:* Or leaning upon any such Decree as makes the term of life *immovable* and fatal; neither would he be hastned or retarded; none of these will make him mad enough to break his Neck, neither would the same presumptions encourage him to cast away his Soul, had he but equal apprehensions of the danger. And it is plain, all the temptations of the World, and all these false encouragements cannot work upon a man, when Death once looks him in the Face; and the great Champions of Prophaneness are tame then, not that God's Threatnings are more true, or made more evident to sense or reason than they were before, but their Faith is active, and they apprehend more strongly then.

To see my self trampled upon by pride and malice, or worse yet, begging of him whom my blood it may be help'd to streams of plenty, begging like *Lazarus* the portion of his *Dogs*, Dogs that are taught to *snarle and bite, and make more sores, not lick them*; this is a state more killing than my want, able almost to tempt a man to any courses. But then if with the Eye of Faith I do but look beyond the gulph, and there behold the Rich man in his flames begging for water, and although it
be

be the Region of eternal weeping, yet not able to procure one drop of his own tears to cool his Tongue. O then I see 'tis better to be *Lazarus*, although there were *no Abraham's bosom* ! But if my Faith look through that bosom also into that of God, and there behold the *Son of God* leaving all the essential felicities of that Bosom to come live a life of Vertue here on Earth, and to teach us to do so ; choosing to do this also in a state of the extreamest poverty, consecrating want and nakedness, contempt and scorn, making them thus the Ensigns of a divine Royalty.

1 John v. 1.

And to encourage us not to sink under any of the Worlds assaults, he hath propos'd Rewards of Vertue, such as God is blessed in ; did my Faith give me but a constant view of all this, sure the paint and varnish of these little things below, the twinkling exhalations of the glories of this World could not dazle my mind and captivate my Soul, I should burst these entanglements to catch at those. 'Tis evident, and 'tis acknowledged, that when our belief shall be all Vision, and our expectation possession, when our Understanding shall become all Sense in Heaven, and we see and tast and have those glories, then we cannot sin, cannot be tempted from them : And therefore by the measures of the nearness of these Objects, of our sight, and of our interest, so are our strengths to stand and overcome Temptations. Now Faith is *sight*, gives *presence* we have seen, and it *gives interest* too, *He that believes is born of God*, faith the Apostle, and therefore hath a right : Now to be born of one is to receive from him a principle of life : He then that hath receiv'd from God a Principle of life such as he can derive, life like his own, such as is led in Heaven ; when he does consider his original and looks upon himself as *born of God*, and consequently *heir of Gods possessions*, which his Faith gives him a prospect of, how will he look down on the tempting glories of this World, on all that makes it grateful and desirable, as upon abject things, and sleight and undervalue whatsoever worldly men, poor Souls ! do fear or hope, or long for, and pursue ? The Mathematicks say that the whole Globe of Earth to one that looks upon it from the Firmament is but as a point, and sure it is demonstrable it must be so : And then how low and how contemptible must it needs seem to him that looks on it as from the Region of the Blessed, from Gods Mansion ? and when his Soul having defecated and freed it self from all earthy, muddy, gross affections, and become expedite and light, expatiates through those unbounded, unfathom'd extensions of Heaven and glory, and looks upon all as his own, that he is very shortly to come to take the full enjoyment of, and hath already seisin of it by his Faith, how will he despise those narrow, those ridiculous bounds which the great ones of this World with Fire and Sword contend for ? when he sees this little point half cover'd with the Sea, almost as much too hid from us and not to be discovered by our arts or industry ; of that which is, much Desert, some parts Frozen, some burnt up, and not inhabited ; and then the little remnant of this point to be the strife and the vexation of Mankind, while multitudes of Nations tear one anothers bowels, spill the Blood and Souls of Myriads for some little patch or other of it ; and those that are not doing so, yet in their sphere too they oppress, deceive, do any thing to get ; and all the rest are in perpetual hurry of vexatious employments, or of toilsom pleasures, or of ruining Vices :
Will

Will he not look on this more unconcern'd than we do on the busie labours of a little World of Ants about a Mole-hill, which Philosophers compare us to? The spectacle is much more to be pitied indeed; the crouds and Squadrons of those Ants, though they should have as many traverses and walks as men have, they have not Soul enough to have their guilt: Probably had they Humane understandings, they would then divide their Mole-hill into Empires, would be false and treacherous to one another, Cheat, Defraud, Oppress and Murder one another for the present share; and had they Reason, they would be more Brutes, than now they are but Pismires: For Beasts have less folly too because they are not Men. But he whose Faith mounts him to Heaven his Birth-place, where he nestles in the secret Bosom of his Father, he needs not be concern'd in any of the carriages of this World, he is above them all, without the sphere of their attraction or magnetism, without the dangers of temptations from them: The World is but as his slave, and it hath no command upon him, he treads it all under his feet, and therefore certainly hath overcome it; the *Condition* and *degree* of which Victory is the next and last thing we are to enquire into.

If you ask the *Stoick* who is this great Conquerour that overcomes the World, he will answer somewhat to this purpose. It is not any of those great successful Robbers that with Armies forrage Nations; it is not he that peoples the whole Sea, filling it with his Navies; nor he that sets his Confines on the remotest parts of the Inhabited World, that can call all his own that the Sun views, so that it shines not out of his Dominions: But the Man that hath conquer'd his own Inclinations to the things below; he that hath rais'd his mind above the Crosses or Contents of this World, that can march among them both dreadless and unconfus'd; the man whose Soul is nothing dazzled by the brightness of Wealth, it shall not blind his Eyes, but through the varnish or the glory that the shine of it does shed, he can discover and will hate an evil action: he that can severely look on all those blandishments that Prosperity furnishes and decks out pleasure in, and can sit continent and abstemious in the midst of its delights, that when it is all Halcyon day with him, nothing but Sunshine, and he swims in the calm streams of flowing Plenty, is not melted by one or other, does not become loose and dissolute at all; the man also that is not shaken by the tumults of Adversity, when like an Earthquake she renverses all, his mind then stands unmov'd, that does not so much suffer, as receive and welcom all that happens, as if he would not have it happen otherwise: In a word, it is the man that hath rais'd his mind above all casualties, the man that does but remember that he is a Man, that is, considers if he do abound, and the World prostitute it self to his Delights, that this cannot continue long; or if the World conspire to make him miserable, remembers that he is not so, except he think he is so, a man greater than his perils, stronger than his desires: And thus far the *Stoick's Wiseman* is victorious. *Christ's Believer* goes a little farther: That man hath the World *Subject* to him; but the Christian does not stay at that, he must not treat it as a *Subject*, but a *Traytor*, one whose Service is Conspiracy, that does attend on us onely to watch and to betray us, to know our weak part, and to storm us there. Therefore as the Lord commanded *Israel* concerning *Amalek*, that did by them as the World doth with us in our journey to *Canaan*, comes upon advantages and smites the feeble, *Deut. xxv. 17, 18, 19. Therefore said the Lord,*

Lord, remember what Amalek did to thee by the way, how he met thee by the way and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary, therefore thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under Heaven, &c. So must we also with the World, put all to death, not spare the best and goodliest as Saul did; yea more, put all to the pomps and cruelties of Death as Gideon us'd the men of Succoth, tear their flesh with thorns and bryars; or as David us'd the Ammonites, put them under Saws and Iron Harrows; so the Christian must serve the World: VVhatever Instruments of Tyranny that us'd upon his Saviour on the Cross, those he must exercise on it again, those Thorns, those Nails, that Spear he must employ like Gideon's Bryars, and like David's iron Harrows, it must be Crucified, and then he is a glorious Conquerour, Gal. vi. 14. God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the World is Crucified to me and I unto the World. He that does march under the Banner of the Cross that Conquering Ensign, as he thereby declares himself upon such terms of enmity with the World that he does look upon himself as one despis'd by it, counted as an accursed thing, for so was that that was Crucified, as it is written, *Cursed is every one that hangeih on the Tree*: So also he does look upon his Standard as the Instrument of Execution to the World, on which it must be Crucified unto him, and so it is: He is so taken off from finding any stirring delights in the glories of it, that he accounts it a dead thing, that hath no more attraits than a Carcass; yea, he does look upon this World as on a detestable and accursed thing, as it was indeed; whose Thorns and Briars do not onely scratch and tear, and do it most when we embrace it most, but also are a Refuge for the cursed Serpent to lurk in, and add his Stings to their sharps, that Devil Serpent that was doom'd into it, and is always in it, and then most when it is most Paradise. Now he that hath thus us'd the World, he that hath nail'd it to the Cross of Christ hath overcome the World.

Judg. viii. 16.

1 Sam. xii. 31.

Gal. iii. 13.

Should we now cast an eye at once upon our selves and that which hath been thus deduc'd tracing all back again; then

First, It would appear so evident that I were vain, if I should stay to prove that those which have such desires to any of the profits, heights or pomps, or any dear thing else, whatever of this World, as that they are impatient if they miscarry in them, and full of strange complacencies if they do answer their desires, these have not overcome the World to any such degree. For had I overcome and Crucified it, sure I should not be so affectionate as to desire, court, and pursue what I had Executed; I should as soon adore the Paintings of my Enemies Tomb, embrace and make love to his Carcass: And were I Crucified to it, had I but one Thorn of my Saviour's Crown struck through my Head, but one Nail in my Foot of those that nailed him to his Tree; were my Soul fastned to a Cross, how were it possible I should run gadding after the gay follies of the World, hasty in my desires of it: Nor could I be impatient if the World do not answer my desires and expectations, disquieted and discompos'd, if I be disappointed, when any thing in it is not subservient to my heights, and I miss of those respects I look'd for; were the World vanquish'd, Crucified to me, should I look for services from my dead Enemy whom I had slain? or be troubled if the person on the Cross did not do fitting reverences to me? or be impatient if I had not respects and

and the Attendances of Pomp from one upon the Gibbet? or if *I were Crucified to it*, certainly these heats would not warm the dead; these are none of the troubles of an Executed person when he is rack'd upon that instrument of Death. He is not grieved because the Nails were not of Silver, the Spears head not bright, or the Cross was not hung with Arras: And suppose it were, sure I were very weak if I should please my self with that, and let such poor contents thrust out all the just sadness of my Sentence and demerit: And yet it is as strange to find delights in having any of the Worlds advantages, and pride my self in the possession if *I be Crucified to it*. But much less is it Crucified to them that will do actions of injustice for the sake of any of the Pumps or profits of the VWorld; there are that grind, and screw, and rack all that they have to deal with; others that deceive and rob in Vizours, plunder in the disguises of fair words and of false arts; Some that dress their Pumps in none of their own trappings, such as they never mean to have a right to, because they never mean to satisfy for them if they can avoid it; they furnish the grandeur of their own condition with the goods of others which they never care to make their own by any recompence, at least not in such ways and seasons as the needs of those that own'd them, and the rules of Justice do require; they cram and sauch their Dishes with the vital Blood indeed of those who starve for want of, and who own all that which does provide them their excesses. Now would a man do this to entertain, and feed, and dress the Carcass of his vanquish'd, his dead Enemy? would he be so vain, so guilty to provide to deck the Cross on which he Crucified his Foe? least of all would he retrench from the proportions of Charity or Piety, deny the calls of Mercy and compassion or Religion for his profits sake, or to furnish out the trains of Pomp, take *the Lords portion* to serve the dead World with? If it were *overcome and Crucified*, they would not feed it with *hallowed things* (and the Poor's portion is such,) nor rob the Altar to give it excesses, take Consecrated things to make a cursed Carcass gay and proud, strip Christ's Body, starve their Saviour (so He does interpret to deny a portion to the naked and hungry) to make Pumps and Riots for an Executed World. In any of these cases he is far from being overcome: And if so, the

Matth. xxv.

45.

Second Proposition will apply it self to such, and must conclude they have no *Faith*; for if they had that were a *Victory*; and however goodly they pretend, they are but Infidels: But it may be they will boldly own the Consequence, for now adays it is not gentile to believe any thing of *Christ's Religion*. And sure 'tis for the Reputation of the gallantry and courage of our love unto this World, that when the covetousness of the *Gadarenes* would not suffer *Christ* in their *Coasts*, and for their *Swines* sake drove him out, when that of *Judas* would not let him be upon the *Earth*, but for thirty Silver pieces did betray him up to Death; that of this Age proceeds, and will not let him be in *Heaven* neither, but it *scoffs him thence*, and his *Faith from the Earth*: And because they like this VWorld so well, they will not suffer there should be any other. It is not my part to Combat these; I undertook only to shew a way to *overcome the World*, if they will not use it let them enjoy their Bondage. And yet without all doubt these candidates of Infidelity and Atheism have faith enough to do the work in good degree; for certain-

ly there's none of them but does believe but he shall die, and it is easie for his Faith to look through that *thin vapour* which our life is stiled by, to the end of that *small span*, and there see a *Bed*, though gay now and soft as the sleep and sins it entertains, then with the Curtains close, the gayety all clouded in a darkness, such as does begin the desolateness of the Grave; if you draw the Curtain to his Faith it sees a languishing sad Corps which nothing in the VWorld can help or ease, foreshrowded in his own dead hue, himself preluding to his winding-sheet, in which within a little while he shall be cast from the society and sight of men, and shall have nothing else of all his VVealth and Pomp: To see all this is no great monstrous difficulty for his Faith. Now though while he is in his prosperity and health, and the VWorld serves every of his desires, and if I should tell him all his superfluities, all that is beyond a meer convenience are but empty things, meer shadows of delight, that onely mock his fancy; should I tell him that the silver furnitures of his Tables, and those more wealthy shining ones those in his Cabinet, and the Silken ones of his Rooms, and the more exquisite pieces of rich Art which people must have skill to understand the pomp of, must have been the Disciples of the Pensil to discern how they do serve Pride; tell him these are phantasms, onely dreams of Pomp, advantages no where but in imagination, I shall not persuade him, but he will despise me. But then if he will ask his Faith how all these will look to him in the state which is now before his thoughts, what his opinion of them will be then? he knows he may as well go to his Pictures now, and entertain his Mirth and Luxuries with them, and hearken to their painted sounds, and dine upon the images of Feasts, as hope in that sad hour from all his Wealth to find content or ease, though his hand sweat under the weight of Winter Jewels they will not heal one aking joint: His Plate the greatest Riot of his Table will not make one morsel tast savory; yea more, he knows that then all the worldly uses of these superfluities such as *satisfying curiosity*, and *emulation*, and the *estimation of the World*, to be the talk of people, and the like; these will appear most evidently to be insipid things, meer conceits of delights; things of which there can be no real enjoyment or advantage any time. And if it then appear evidently that in themselves they are so, then they are so always; and a constant Contemplation of that time will make them always seem so. So that a Faith that cannot see into another VWorld, that will but look through this, must needs take off our hearts from the entanglements of those advantages, when it appears how small a thing can dash them all so as that we cannot enjoy them while we have them, and that the enjoyment of them while we do is but imaginary.

And really when we consider how unquiet and disturb'd a thing Man is, except he raise himself above the Power of all these, how till the Mind escape out of the whirl and circuit of the Worlds allurements; it cannot but be in perpetual agitations; at every ebb or flow of things without, there is a tide within of swelling or sinking affections; every change abroad does make a change of thoughts and of designs, cross Accidents have cross Passions, and I am as much an Universe of various thwarting contradictory affections, as the World is of motions.

How

How the Beasts are free, serene and quiet Creatures in comparison, for they not understanding many Objects, consequently have few inclinations, and their satisfactions very obvious; whereas the Comprehensive mind of Man that looks into a world of things, and out of them creates a world of temptations, finds out varieties of Pleasures or of Profits, and then starts as many eager affections in himself to pursue them; his copious understanding does but procure him various Lusts, and his Reason does but make him sagacious in searching out occasions of disquiet. Nor is it possible it should be otherwise, for while my inclinations are chain'd to those external movements, and my slavish mind attends upon those inclinations, I must needs suffer as many servitudes as the world hath changes of temptation: And then putting these two Considerations together, how unsatisfying and how uneasy too it is to be engaged in the Advantages of this World, which are merely Dreams of good things that disturb our rest and make our sleep unquiet, with the working of Imagination, yet do but delude the Appetite, and we find we have had nothing when we awake; sure if I thought there were no other World, yet would I not be greedy after the great things of this, when 'tis more easie far to want them, here would I indulge myself the sensuality of a Contented mind, the luxury of an Ataraxy, of an indifference as to all these things, of being quiet and untroubled by not having them, free from the hurry and disorder of them. The *Moralists* did so account it certainly, when they call'd this living according to our Nature, as if all the other were a Violence upon us; and upon the same ground they accounted it not hard to overcome the Allurements of this World, it was onely not to invade and use a force upon themselves and vanquish their own natures: And sure we that are *Christians*, and are so no farther than as we have *this Faith* here in the Text, we must not count it hard; we who have the Revelations and Example of the blessed *Jesus*, all that he hath done to make it easie, now saith he *Θαρσύνε ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον*. Courage, for I have overcome the World: They are but broken forces we are to resist, we have the Strengths of Heaven on our side, and therefore sure we may adventure to encounter them; and if we do begin to faint, we have an *Almighty Captain of Salvation*, and if we have but Faith to lay hold on him, and be not false to our own selves, but keep our hold, if we be foiled, Christ must be vanquish'd too, and we may fear impossibilities as well. When those poor Heathen march'd on naked, had none of our Weapons to assault the World, or to defend themselves, had neither *Shield of Faith*, nor *Helmet of Salvation*, no *Sword of the Spirit* the *Word of God*, and yet master'd it in great degrees, shall we that are *harnessed turn our selves back in the day of Battel*? and confute this Scripture; and make good that *they do overcome the World most easily who never heard that Jesus was the Son of God*? 'Tis not onely base for us to faint most who have most advantage, but it is a contradiction for them to be overcome that have the Victory: Now *this is the Victory that overcometh the World even our Faith*; the Victory that overcomes both Worlds indeed; it tramples upon this, and lays hold upon that to come, out-doing what *S. Paul* sings of it in his *ἑμνίστην*, *Heb. xi.* His Heroes through Faith subdu'd earthly Kingdoms, but by Faith we overthrow the Kingdom of the Prince and God of this World, and the Kingdom too of the Almighty

suffers violence from it, and our *Faith takes that by force, forces even a right to it*: By it they stop'd the mouths of Lions in the Wilderness; by it we stop that roaring Lion's mouth that compasses the Earth seeking whom he may devour; by it they quench'd the violence of Fire, we the Everlasting burnings; by that Women received their dead raised to life again: by it we shall rise to Immortality of Life and blessedness, receive all that we do believe, more than we can comprehend, receive the end of our Faith the salvation of our Souls: Which God of his Mercy state us all in for the sake of Jesus Christ the Author and the Finisher of our Faith, and the Captain of our Salvation:

To whom with the Father, &c.

The

The Ninth
SERMON,
 Preached at
WHITE-HALL.

Sixth Wednesday in LENT, 1664.

GAL. II. 20.

I am Crucified with Christ.



THE Ancient Observation of this Time would justify my Choice, make the Text Seasonable in the most Severe sense it can put on, when in their *Exomologeses* they ate onely the Bread of Sorrow, and tears were their Drink day and night, so as that in the Agonies of their Repentance they did *Crucife* without a Meraphor, and *mortife* the Body of *Flesh* as well as *Sin*. But it seems to have happened in our Sins as in our great Diseases, men are grown more skilful, and have found out much more grateful ways of Cure, there is no need of going through a discipline of Torments, a whole course of Medicinal Cruelty, but they can heal, at least palliate with more ease and speed. Besides that, Christianity is now of a more delicate and tender make, and cannot bear austerities, neither come I here to call for them, or to provoke their Constitutions; if they have found a softer and more pleasant way to Heaven, on Gods Name let them walk in it; onely in our walk we are now coming within ken of *the Cross of Christ*, and we can bear commemorations of his Passion; they make the closing Ceremony of this Season, which was set aside on purpose by the preparations of Humiliation to fit us for the performances and expiations of that Day, by Repentance to put off our *Old Man, the whole Body of Sin*, that we may hang it on his Cross as we go by. That is the onely use of this time, and the onely application of that Day. Which I crave leave to shew you how to make at once: And without this that Ceremony howsoever solemn, will be meerly Pageantry,

try, not Worship; the observation but dramatick; and we shall have no part in the Atonement, onely in the Scene of that days Tragedy, rather than Sacrifice: He onely Celebrates that Passion, onely he partakes that Offering, who can say with S. Paul, *I am Crucified with Christ.*

In which words we shall first endeavour to discover what this Person is, *I.*

Secondly, What the Nature is of that Condition and estate which S. Paul does affirm here of that Person; and that

First, In it self, *Crucified; I am Crucified.*

Secondly, In its adjunct; *with Christ*, Which because it cannot signifie conjunction in time, he is not now upon the Cross, that I might say, now *I am Crucified with him*, nor when *He* was, was *I*, that I might say then, *I am Crucified with Christ*; but we shall find it hath other importances. First it implies a likeness to Christ's Passion, *I am Crucified as he was*, so it means through the whole *Rom. vi.* and the being *crucified with Christ* is what S. Paul elsewhere expresses by the being *made conformable to his death.*

Secondly, It imports more, even Communication and partaking with him in his Passion, *being planted together in the likeness of his death*, *Rom. vi. 5.* and *I am Crucified with Christ*, does mean *I have a fellowship of his Sufferings*, as he words it, *Phil. iii. 10.*

Thirdly, It means also a conjunction of causal Relation, that there is a Vertue and Efficacy in the Cross of Christ to work the Sinner into Crucifying of his sin, so the particle must needs import, *Ephes. ii. 6.* *ὁ συνανάθειεν* he hath set us together with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Where we are neither in conformity, nor fellowship, but onely in our head and in our cause; so *I am Crucified with Christ* does mean his Passion hath an influence to Crucifie and cause in me the death of Sin.

Of these in order; and

First, *what* this Person is? I say not *who*? we know it was S. Paul, but *what*? and the reason of the Enquiry is because we find indeed elsewhere *crucifying the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts* required, and we are also bid to *mortifie our members that are on the Earth; such as Fornication and Uncleanness, Covetousness* and the like. But these are not *I*, how am I mortified in these? Is it because it may be they are grown so dear to me, that I am Crucified in their destruction? and long practice and acquaintance hath riveted them into my very heart? Now the Wen we know though an excrescent tumour, but an accessory bag of noxious humours, yet if it lay hold on any noble part, take in some Nerve or Artery, then he must cut the thread of Life that cuts it off: So he must rent my heart indeed that tears my pleasures from me; Life it self does seem to have so little satisfaction without them, that it is a death to me to part with them. Or else hath the *Old Man* no Soul? is he all Flesh? and hath Iniquity debas'd the whole of him, so that his very Spirit is become *Body of Sin*, so as that Wickedness should be our very Being, be all one with us, and *I*, and my *corruptions* prove denominations of one importance, signifie the very same? so it is indeed: Besides the carnal part that is *sold under sin*, and consequently does deserve the *Cross*, that punishment of *Slaves*, the part also that is in the quite opposite extream, that *lusts against the flesh*, that must be made away.

Gal. v. xxiv.
Coll. iii. 5.

way. *Be ye transform'd by the renewing of your mind*, Rom. xii. 2. And if there be any sublimer and more delectated part in that, it must submit to the same Fate, *Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind*, Ephes. iv. 23. Corruption hath invaded that: Τὸ ἡγμενικόν the diviner ruling part, is grown a slave to the Beast part of him, it hath debauch'd its notions whereby it should discriminate good from evil, so that now it can discern no natural difference between them, but does measure both meerly by his present inclinations and concerns, and the eternal Laws of Honesty are blotted out, and principles of interest and irreligion rais'd there in the place, and buttress'd by false reasonings and Discourses. Now all these Fortresses of Vice that maintain and secure a man in sin must be demolish'd, all such *imaginations cast down, and every high thing that ex-* 2 Cor. x. 5. *alteth it self against the knowledge of God, and every thought brought into Captivity to the obedience of Christ*: That Spirit of the mind must be destroyed, and we transformed into persons of new notions and reasonings. But above all the remaining part of Man, his own Will must be mortified, which besides its natural *πόνη* and *ἐπιθυμία*, by perverse inclinations to sollicitations of flesh is most corrupted, and most dangerous, in that which way soever it inclines, it draws the whole Man after it: If any thing in us be crucified in a Conformity to Christ, it must be this; for in that death wherein Christ offered up himself upon the Cross (where although the Divine Nature gave the value, 'twas onely the Humane Nature made the Offering) there it was the *crucifying his own Will*, that above all other the ingredients made his Death a Sacrifice, and the price of our Redemption. God that had given him his Blood and Life, might call for it again when and how he saw good, and being due, it was not properly a price that could be given him for sin; but his free voluntary choice, his being willing to endure the Agonies and Contempts of the Cross, his stabbing his own natural desires with a resolute determination, *Not my will, but thine be done*: This his own Will Luke xxii. 42. was his own Offering; and such is ours, *if we be Crucified with Christ, made conformable to his death; if we present our selves a Sacrifice acceptable to the Lord*; for our will is not given up to him, till it do perfectly comport with his; but that it cannot do, till we renounce our own desires, till we have brought our selves to an indifference in outward things, to such a resignation as she is storied to have had, who being in her Sicknes bid to choose whether she rather would have Health or Death, made answer, *Vehementissimè desidero ut non facias voluntatem meam Domine*, this above all I desire, that thou wilt not do my will, I would have thee not do what I desire and would have. So that τὸ ὁλόκληρον ἡμῶν, the whole of us, the Spirit, Soul and Flesh, go to make up this Person; and the *body of Sin is the Old man entire*. I, whole I am nothing but a mass of guilts, my Senses are the bands of wickedness, that procure for my evil inclinations, my members are the weapons of unrighteousness, my Body is a Body of Sin and Death, and the affections of my Soul are Lusts, its faculties are the powers of Sin, yea, and the Spirit of my mind, that Breath of God is putrefied; that δαίμων ἐν ἡμῖν, that Angel-part of me is fall'n and turn'd Apostate; and however I be partly Son of Man, and partly Son of God, yet I am wholly Child of Wrath, and so fit to be Crucified.

* Which

Which calls me to the next Enquiry, to the nature of the duty here intended, I am *Crucified*.

What is design'd by it S. Paul does perfectly declare *Rom. vi. 6. Our old man is crucified with Christ that the body of Sin might be destroyed, that we should no longer serve sin*: So that it means a through Repentance, and abandoning of former evil Courses: A Duty which there are few men but in some instants of their life think absolutely necessary, and persuade themselves they do perform it. At some time or other they are forc'd to recollect and grow displeas'd and angry at their sins, and have some sad reflections on them, beg for mercy and forgiveness, and do think of leaving them; and when they have return'd to them again, they shake the head, and chafe, and curse at their own weakness, and renew their purposes it may be; and do this as oft as such a Season as this is, or other like occasions suggest it to or move them: And with this they satisfy themselves, and hope if God do please to take them hence in some such muddy, gloomy fit of their Repentance, all's well. Now shall we call this being Crucified? are there Racks and Tortures in this discipline? hath a Spear prick'd them to the heart, and no blood nor no water, no tears gush out thence? hath it made no issue for some hearty Sorrow to purle out?

Indeed I must confess, the Scripture does sometimes word the performance of this Duty in expressions that are not so sower, but of an easier importance; as first, *put off the Old Man*, as if all were but *Garment*; put it off I say, not as they strip'd our Saviour in order to his Scourgings and his Cross, but intimating, to us what an easie thing it is to cast off Sin for them, who do begin with it betimes, before it get too close to the heart. *Ὡς περ γὰρ τὸ ἀνδύσασθαι ἐν ὀδυσαδίᾳ ῥάδιον*, &c. saith *Theophyl.* even as easie as putting off thy Cloaths, and thy Repentance is but as thy Shift, thy change of life like changing thy Apparel.

But alas! for all the easiness which this expression hints, where the sins also lie in the Attire, as besides emulation, pride, vainglory, great uncharitableness and inhumanity, cruel injustice and oppression often do, when many are undone through want of those dues which do furnish other men with the excesses of this kind: when the sins therefore lie in the Attire, and they may *put them off* without a Metaphor, yet it is so hard that it cannot be done; sometimes the worth of a whole Province hangs upon a slender thread about a Neck, a Patrimony thrust upon one joint of one least Finger, and these warts of a Rock or a Shell-fish with the appendages eat out Estates and starve poor Creditors; for whom indeed they should command *these stones to be made bread*; but that's a Miracle too stubborn for their Vertue. And then how will they proceed to the next expression of this Duty? *Circumcise your selves to the Lord, and take away the foreskin of your hearts*; Jer. iv. 4. These are harder and more bloody words, they differ in the pain and anguish that they put us to, as much as to *uncloath* and *flea* would do. It appears indeed this punishment of fleaing often went before the Cross. *Τὸ δέσμα περιαιρούμεν ἀνταυρούμεν ὑπὸ Παρυσάνδος* saith *Ctesias* of one, *having his Skin pull'd off he was Crucified*: And the scourges in some measure did inflict this on our Saviour, when they put off his Cloaths they strip'd his Skin also; left him no covering but some rags of that which whipping had torn from his flesh. Yet this expression sounds harsher, when it bids us *circumcise*

circumcise the foreskin of our hearts, and tear it from thence, flea that: When long Conversation with the pleasures of a sin hath not onely given them Regallias, but hath made them necessary to us, so as that we cannot be without them; when Custom craves with greater feaver than our thirst; when if we want it, we have qualms, faintings of Soul, as if the life were in that *blood of the grape*, when men can part as easily with their own *bowels*, as the *Luxuries* that feed them; if you take away their *Dishes*, then you take their *Souls which dwell in them*; when the sins of the *Bed* are as needful and refreshing as the *sleeps* of it; when to bid a man *not look*, not satisfie his lustful eye, is every jot as cruel as that other, *If thine eye offend thee pluck it out*: For if he must no more find pleasure in his sight, he hath no use of it; yea if this be indeed a kindness not to leave him Eyes to be to him the same as *Appetite to Tantalus*, that which he must not satisfie, and is his hell: 'Tis easie if the Lust be got no further than the Eye to pull them out together; but if through that it shoot into the Blood and Spirits, mix heats with those, if it enwrap the heart, twist with its strings, and warm the Soul with its desires; so that it Spirit all the motions, all the thoughts and wishes of the heart; when it is thus, to make the heart to stifle its own motions, stab its thoughts, and strangle all its wishes; to untwist and disentangle and to tear it thence, if this be to be *Circumcised with the Circumcision of Christ*, and he that hath not the sign of this, *the Seal of the New Covenant*, as he that in the Old had not the other, was, must be *cut off*; our long habituated hardned Sinners must not think that there is any thing of true Repentance in their easie, perfunctory, sleight performances; there is something like Death in the Duty, which yet is required of us farther under variety of more severe expressions; for we are bid thirdly to *slay the Body of Sin*, Rom. vi. 6. *to mortifie our members*, Col. iii. 5. and to *Crucifie*, Gal. vi. 14. which how it may be done, the next consideration of S. Paul's condition in the Text, and my next part declare. *I am Crucified with Christ*, that is, first as he was, by being made conformable to his Death.

And truly should we trace him through all the stages of his Passion, we should hardly find one passage but is made to be transcribed by us in dealing with our sins.

First he began it with *Agony*, when *his Soul was exceeding heavy*, for it Matth. xxvi. labour'd with such weight of indignation as did make the Son of God to 37. sink under the meer apprehension: And he was *sorrowful unto Death*, so Verf. 38. as that his whole Body did weep Blood. The Sinners passion, his Repentance is exactly like it, it begins always with grief and sense of weight, whoever is regenerate was conceiv'd in sorrow, and brought forth with pangs, and *the Child of God* too is *born weeping*. And for loads, the Church when she does call us to shew forth this Death of Christ, as if she did prescribe that very Agony, requires that we should find that *Garden at the Altar*, makes us say *we are heartily sorry for our misdoings*, *the remembrance of them is grievous unto us*, *the burden of them is intolerable*. So that the *Sinner's Soul* must be *exceeding heavy* too.

Secondly, There he is betrayed by his own domestick, sold for the poorest Price imaginable, as a *Slave for thirty pieces of silver*. I shall not mind you what unworthy things the love of Money does engage men to; to sell a *Christ*, a *Saviour*, and a *God*! and rather than stand out,

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at such a base rate, as we scorn to buy a *sin* at; every single act's engagement to Damnation, costs more than the Ransom of the World is sold for; and the Blood of God is purchas'd cheaper than any one opportunity of Vice does stand us in! But I onely mind you here, that he shall have a better hire that will but be a *Judas* to his own iniquities: do but betray the Regent sins, deliver them up and thou shalt have everlasting Heaven.

Thirdly, We find him next carried before the *High Priest*. And the strictest times of Christianity would serve their sins so, to receive his doom upon them, to be excommunicated into Reformation: But I shall not urge how we can discover to a *Physician* our shames, all our most putrid Guilts as well as Ulcers, and make him our *Confessor* in our most secret sins; neither will I be inquisitive why the *Physicians of our souls* are balk'd; but will pass this part of the Conformity, and follow *Christ* to *Pontius Pilate*. And for this part we our selves are fitted, the whole furniture of a Judicial Court, all that makes up both Bench and Bar is born within us. God hath given us a *Conscience* whereby we are a *Law to our selves*, Rom. ii. We have ἵσας μαρτυρίας εἰς τὸ θανάτωσθαι, which the *Jews* did want; such evidence as is sufficient to condemn us; the same Conscience that is privy to our doings, and stands by our thoughts, and sees through our intentions, is a *thousand witnesses*: And that there may be a *Prosecutor*, our own thoughts accuse us saith *S. Paul*; and if we will give them way, will aggravate each Circumstance of guilt and danger, bark, and howl, and cry as loud against us, as the *Jews* did against *Christ*, for Sin is of so murdering a guilt it will be sure to slay it self: and that he may not want his deserved Ruin, the Sinner makes his own *Indictment*, yea, and his own *Sentence* too, for our own heart condemns us, saith *S. John*: And when ever it does so, Oh that we would follow it through all the gradations that brought *Christ* to Death! and use our wickedness as he was us'd; strip it from its Cloaths, bare it from its fair pretexts it useth to be dress'd in! Lay our *anger* haked from all those excuses which our provocations, that either wrath or humour will be sure to think intolerable, do make for it! strip our *Pride* and *Vanity* from those paints and dresses which the Custom of the Age, that does require and warrant strange things, dawbs the sin with! use our *Luxuries* and *Intemperances* so, and the other greater and more *thirsty droppe*, that of Wealth, and of unjust unworthy gains, which there are richer *Luxuries* in too! And there are none of these but have their pleas, their colours which they set themselves out in, to please the Appetite and to deceive the Mind, all which we must strip off; and then when we have laid them naked, spit upon them, vomit all our spleen and contumelious despite at that which hath made us so ugly in Gods sight; scourge it with *Austerities*, and buffet it as they did *Christ*, and *S. Paul* did himself, 1 Cor. xvi. 27. And when the Body of Sin is thus tamed and weakened, it will be easie then to lead it out and crucifie it. A Crucifixion this that does make our Good-Friday be a day of Expiation and Atonement to us: A fight which next to that of his own Son upon the Cross, is the most acceptable to the Lord; when he does see us execute his Enemies although they be our selves, and Crucifie the dear Affections of our bosom as God did. This is indeed to be conform'd unto the death of *Christ*.

If I might have leave to go before you and to let you into the Example, draw the Curtain from before the Passion, I would call my Sins out, drag them to behold that Prospect, hale them into the Garden, shew them how he was us'd there. You my *Extravagancies of my youth*, my mad follies and wild jollities, come see my Saviour yonder, how he swoons when guilt began to make approaches towards him! and can I make my self merry with nothing else but that which made him die? tickle, cheer, and heighten my self with Agonies? You my *intemperate Draughts*, my full Bowls and the riotous Evenings I have past, look yonder what a sad night do these make Christ pass! look what a Cup he holds, which makes him fall lower to deprecate, than ever my Excesses made me lie. You my *lazy Luxuries, Fulsness of Bread, and Idleness*, whereby I have controu'd Gods Curse, and onely in the Sweat of others Faces eat my Bread, and in that dew drank up the Spirits of those multitudes that toil to faintings to maintain my dissolute life, see how he is forc'd to bear the whole Curse for me how the *Thorns* grow on his head, and how he *Sweats* all over. You my *supine Devotions* which do scarce afford my God a knee, and less an heart, not when I am deprecating an Eternity of all those Torments which kill'd Christ! look yonder how he prays, behold him on his Face petitioning, see there how he sweats and begs. You my little *Malices* and my vexatious *Angers*, that are hot and quick as Fire it self, and that do fly as high too, that are up at Heaven strait for the least wrong on Earth! look how he bears his, how his patience seems wounded onely in a wound that fell upon his Persecutors! and when one that came to apprehend him wrongfully was hurt, as if Matth. xxvi. the Sword of his defence had injur'd him, he threatned and for ever 51. curs'd the black deeds of that angry Weapon, and made restitution of Verse 52. what he had not taken, made his Adversary whole whom he had not hurt! See how with his cruel Judges he is as a *Sheep*, that not before Luke xxii. 51. his shearers onely, but before his *Butcher too, is dumb*. You my *Scorns*, and my *high Stomach* that will take no satisfaction but Blood and Soul for the faults of inadvertency, for such as not the *wrong*, but *humour* makes offences: look how they use him, they *buffet*, and *revile and spit upon him*. Ye my *dreadful Oaths* and bitter *imprecations* which I use to lace my speeches with, or belch out against any one that does offend me in the least, making the *Wounds and Blood of God*, and other such sad words, either my foolish modes of speaking, or the spittings of my peevishness. There you may see what 'tis I play with so, you may behold the Life of Christ pouring out at those Wounds which I speak so idly of, and what I mingle with my sportive talk is Agony, such as they *that beheld afar off struck their breasts at*, and to see them onely was a Passion. Ye my *Atheisms* and my *Irreligion*——but alas you have no prospect yonder, it's but faint before you who out-do the Example; whatsoever *Judas* and the rest did to the *Man Christ Jesus*, you attempt on *God*, you invade Heaven, *Sentence, Crucifie Divinity it self*.

And now having shewed my Sins this Copy of themselves, what they are in their own demerits, when my bowels do begin to turn within me at that miserable usage which Christ underwent, it will be a time to execute an act of Indignation at my self, who have resetted in my bosom all these Traytors to my Saviour; made those things the joy and entertainment of my life which had their hands in the Blood of my God;

and what a stupid senseless Soul have I, that was never troubled heartily at that, which did make him almost out of hope? and if this be the effect of sin, then it is time for me to throw it off, *O my Jesu!* sure I am, I am not able to support the weight of that thou didst sink under. Thou didst come *to bear our sins in thy own Body on the Tree*, therefore in thy Body they were nailed to the Cross, and then certainly I will not force and tear them thence: No, there I leave them, and will never re-assume them more; which resolution is the effect of that *virtue and efficacy* which is in *the Cross of Christ* to the *crucifying of sin*, which is the second sense in which the Christian does profess with *S. Paul, I am Crucified with Christ.*

There are some Learned Men, that when they would assign reasons sufficient to move God to lay the punishment of our iniquities upon his Son, and execute that Indignation that was due to us on the most innocent, most *Holy Jesus*, give this onely, that this was the highest and most signal way imaginable to discover Gods most infinite displeasure against Sin, and by consequence to terrifie men from the practice of it: For if any thing in Heaven or in Earth could *make us fear, and from henceforth commit no such evil*, it was surely this, to see Sin sporting in the Agonies of Christ, Iniquity triumphing in the Blood of God: To see those dire instances of the deservings of a Sinner, those amazing prelusions to his expectations; and consider it was easier for God to execute all this upon his Son than suffer Sin to go unpunish'd. Indeed they make all that is real in the whole account they give of satisfaction made to God for sin to consist in this, that *the temporal Death of Christ* (which God by virtue of his absolute Dominion may inflict on the most innocent, taking away that which himself had given, especially since Christ who had that right over his own life, which none else had, did of his own accord submit to it; and he *laid down his life, who had a power to do so.*) That Death I say, *might justly be ordain'd by God for an Example of his Wrath and Hatred against Sin, and then might be accepted in the stead of their death, who were warned by that example, and affrighted from committing sin.* And truly there is colour for it, for all satisfaction seems either of a loss sustain'd, which is acquired by compensation, or the satisfaction of our Anger, which is commonly appeased by the sufferings of the injurious party; or else the satisfaction of our fears and doubts, that we may be secure not to sustain the like again, which is most likely to be best provided for by punishment: For sure one will not venture upon that which he must suffer for the doing.

John x. 18.

Now of all these the first, the satisfaction of *compensation*, as it cannot properly be made to God who could sustain no real diminution by Man's sin: For *though thy wickedness, saith Job, may hurt a man as thou art, yet if thou sinnest what dost thou against God? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou to him?* but onely as the *breaking of his Law* does in *S. Paul's* expression *dishonour him* amongst men; so also it were easie to demonstrate that this one example does exalt more of Gods attributes, and to a greater height, than either if his Law had been obey'd or executed, if that either were our business, or if this sort of satisfaction did not properly belong onely to the offended party, not the supream Judge or Governour as such, under which notion God is here to be considered. As neither does the second satisfaction, that of *anger*, the Judge being to be

Job xxxv. 8, 9.

Rom. ii. 13.

be like his Law, that hath no passions or affections. And truly since the things that do satisfy our angers and revenges are no real goods, the satisfactions of them are unnatural, and therefore surely not Divine: Monstrous appetite that hath learn'd to desire mischief, hath also taught us to delight in misery, and be satisfied with the griefs of others, which being nothing to us cannot be our good: And although we are stil'd Children of Wrath, as if our portion were to be onely Plagues, our inheritance Perdition, and the fearful issues of Gods Fury: Yet since to be angry signifies in God no more than this, to testifie what great abhorrency he hath to sin, how contrary to him, how not to be indur'd it is: It was impossible for God when he had once resolv'd to pardon sin, to testifie that more than by resolving not to pardon it without such an Example; so that it did satisfy his anger perfectly. But all true satisfaction lies in the provision that is made by punishment against future offences.

This is that which the *Magistrate* and *Law* requires, *nec enim irascitur, sed cavet*; for by Punishment they cannot call back the offences that are past, undo or make them not have been: but they can make men not to dare to do them again, nor others by their example.

This is the end why they annex Penalties to their Laws, expressly said so, *Deut. xix. 20.* Which end therefore when they attain by Punishment, the *Law* and *Magistrate* is satisfied. For it is not so much the Death of the Offender that is satisfaction of the Law, as the Example of Terror that it gives; and therefore humane Lawgivers have oft thought fit to change the Penalty; and where Death was appointed, to assign other sufferings that consist with Life, and prolong Misery and Terror, as Proscription, and the Gallies, &c. Accordingly to propose an Example of Terror to us, God laid all the severe inflictions of the Passion-day upon his own Son. Now it is evident that the example of a Man suffering for the breach of Laws does certainly hedge in those Laws, keep them more safe from violence; therefore we see those Laws are best observ'd which the Magistrate's Sword does most guard; and Experience would quickly make it good, a Land would prove but a meer Shambles, and a Man's life cheaper than a Beast's, if Murderers and Duellists shall get impunity more easily than he that steals an Horse or Sheep. When on the other side, that Nation from whom we most receive the fashions of our Vices also, whom the honour of that sin is most peculiar to; though they seem'd to value it above Estate, and Life, and Family, and Soul, yet we know could be beaten from it by some sharp Examples. And then when our Lawgiver, as he spake his Laws at first with Thunder and with Lightning, as if they brought their Sentence along with them, and the very promulgation was a Copy and Example of their Execution: So also he did write those Laws in Blood, to let us see what does await transgression, how he that spar'd not his own dear Son, will certainly not spare any impenitent, this could not chuse but have some influence, if 'twere consider'd. Should we call to mind the kindness God had at this time to lost Man, how he so long'd to pity him, that he resolv'd not to pity himself; how yet in all those turnings of his bowels within him, his repentings over Man, when his Compassion was at such an height as to give his well beloved Son to satisfy for our transgressions; in the midst of all those inclinations to us, at that very time how yet he did so hate our sins,

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that nothing else could satisfy him, but *the Blood of God*: How he made the Son of God *empty himself* of his Divinity and of his Soul, and all to raise a sum only to purchase one example of that Indignation that attends a Sinner; it will be easie then to recollect how unsupportable that Wrath will be to the impenitent in the Day of his fierce Anger; when he shall have no kindness left for them, but the Omnipotence of Mercy will become Almighty Fury: Who shall be able to avoid or to endure the issues of it? shall I think to scape them when he spared not his own Son, or shall I venture upon bearing that to all Eternity which that Son was not able to support some hours? Thus as *S. Paul* expresses, *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, a Sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh*, that is, he shewed what did await iniquity, that men by so great an example of his Wrath, might be frighted from the practice. *Et si quis morte Christi admonitus poeniteat, iste per mortem Christi peccato mortuus esse dicitur*, saith *Origen* on *Rom. vi. 1.* He who seeing that Example of Christ Crucified for sin is warned by it into Repentance, he is *crucified with Christ*. God dealing with us as Men do with a young Prince, that must be disciplin'd by the correction of another for his faults; and in this sense also, our chastisement was upon Christ, and by his stripes we are cur'd.

And now though I propose not this as if I thought this Reason were sufficient of it self, which seems to give no good account how any could be ransom'd ere Christ suffered: (which yet certainly they were, the vertue of his Death extending to all former Ages, as it proved most evidently *Heb. ix. 25.* a place which *Crellius* himself does give no satisfaction to) if the satisfaction of his Death consisted onely in its being an Example, it could no more satisfy for the sins of former Ages, than it could be an Example ere it was in being: If that Death were accepted in the stead of their death, who by that Example are frighted into Repentance, what was accepted for their sins, who had no such vision of it, as that it could not or did affright them, yet repented? Yet to them that have beheld it in its vigour, they that can controul this check to Vice, and when to shew us an Example it cost God the life of his own Son, after the prospect of whose Cross he hath not any Terrour to propose, this being the contrivance of the Divine Mind, and the stress of all his most Almighty Attributes conjoyn'd in one compounded Miracle, can yet make all this vain and fruitless and have no effect, are not feared nor warned by it; but as if it signified no peril to their sins, they can come once a year to entertain themselves with the Example and go from the Agonies unconcern'd to the sins that inflicted them, and that shew forth themselves in them: Who act as if those were the onely soft and pleasant things that crush'd his Blood and Soul out, as if those which did make the Son of God cry out as if he did almost despair, were the onely fit things to make men jolly: And do thus as they did it in despite to this great method of Salvation, as if they did enjoy the indignation of the Wrath of God, as if those Agonies like the other difficulties of their sins did more provoke to them, or like the *Paschal bitter herbs* that typified them, were as *sawce* to the Riots of their Vices. These certainly are men of a most desperate appetite and courage. But 'tis much more to be lamented that the Law of God does not seem better guarded by this dire Example than it was of old among the *Jews*, when it shew'd the Sinner his deservings onely

only by the dying of his Breast, and had no other fence nor satisfaction than the *blood of Bulls and Goats*: It is not very visible that it hath wrought upon consideration so as to make us *more fear and beware*; nay, we may question whether the example of my *Bullock dying for my sin*, would not restrain and terrifie me more than that of *Jesus crucified* for it: If I were to expiate the Blood with which I word my *Anger* and my *Oaths*, with the blood of my own Flocks, if that *Luxury* which plunders every Element and brings a little Universe at once upon my Table to treat it self withal, were but to kill one *Heifer for the Temple*, and I to expiate each *surfeit* by one such *Religious Riot*: Were I to quench the feavers of an *Intemperance* with a *drink-offering*, 'tis possible I should not be so prone to sacrifice to my *Genius*, if I must sacrifice to *God* for doing so, and I should be more tender of my *Beasts* than I am of my *Saviour*. Now how comes this to pass? It is impossible that we should be so apprehensive of our own demerits, should we see them represented in the sufferings of a *Beast*, as when they are shewed to us in those of *the Son of God*. What is it then? Should we account *our selves* to suffer in *our Beast*? His Death were our own *loss* and *punishment*: And had we no communion in this *Death of Christ*? was not that *our own*? or account we our concern and share in that *less valuable* than in that of our *Beast*? Far be this from us, we are no further *Christians* than we can affirm with *St. Paul* (who challengeth a *fellowship in all Christ's sufferings*, and boasts it, saying) *I am Crucified with Christ*. Which brings me to the last sense of the words; *I have a share and am a Partner in that Cross, and all the satisfactions that were wrought upon it*.

This is that *κοινωνία παθημάτων* *Phil. iii. 10.* a partaking in *Christ's Passion*, having his *Sufferings* communicated to us, made our own, as if we had been crucified with him: as much as he that offered a peace-offering was said to be *τὸ θυσιασθεῖν κοινωνῶς*, *1 Cor. x. 18.* to communicate with the Altar, and partake the Sacrifice which he really did. We read indeed there in the *sixteenth verse*, that in the Sacrament there is *κοινωνία αἵματος*, the shedding of *Christ's Blood* is there communicated, reckoned to us, but it is communicated in a *Cup of Blessing*.

And is this to be a Partner in his Crucifixion, to partake only the Sacrament of Crucifixion? not to receive the Wounds and Torments, but the Benefits, the pledge of the satisfactions of the Cross, the Seal of the Remissions that he purchas'd on it? *Blessed Jesu!* we should have born thy pangs, and all the dire things thou didst suffer, ought to have been ours eternally; that Agony which an Angels comfort could not calm, that dreadful Terrour which exprest it self in the cold Sweat of clotted Blood, that greater Terrour which came so near Despair as to make thee cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* all should have been our portion to everlastingness, and spent their fury on our Souls: And wilt thou have us bear no more of this than the remembrance? All our Mount Olivet and Golgotha be only the *Lords Table* and his *Entertainment*? dost thou communicate thy Agonies in *Eucharistick wine*? and is this to be *Crucified with Christ*? so he does account it seems. He that by virtue of the Cross of Christ hath crucified his body of Sin, Christ's satisfactions are accounted to him, he is esteemed to have a fellowship in all the sufferings, to have had an hand in all that was done for Man on the Cross, they are all reckoned his: And as Christ bore the guilt of all our doings

doings on the Tree, so he will have us bear the *name*, and *merit*, and *reward* of his; for as S. Paul does express, *Rom. vi. 5. We are planted together in the likeness of his death*, by being made conformable to that in crucifying of our sins, we are inoculated as it were, and both together ingrafted in into the Cross, and so there is deriv'd to us the vertue of that Stem, that Root of Expiation and Atonement; and by this insertion being as the same S. Paul says, *Phil. iii. 9. found in him, we have his Righteousness*. That poor Soul that does throw himself down in the strict humiliations of Repentance at the footstool of the Cross, and there beholds his Saviour dying for him, and that is himself by Penitence incorporated into him, grafted into his Death, and planted in his very Passion, as Origen and Thomas interpret. He may take confidence to say, *Behold Lord, if the satisfactions of thy Eternal Justice be acceptable to thee, if the blood of God that is offer'd up without spot be a well-pleasing Sacrifice, look down at once on thy Messiah and on my poor Soul! turn not thy face from me, for whatever my guils are, I have an equal Sacrifice, those are my satisfactions, and that blood my Offering, the Passion and propitiation of the Cross are mine. I am Crucified with Christ*.

We have gone through all the Parts, all the Considerations of this Expression, and have no more now to take notice of but this, that all of them must go together, that they never are fulfill'd afunder, but he only whom the efficacy of the Cross of Christ hath wrought on to the Crucifying of sin, he only hath the satisfactions of the Cross imputed to him, he is planted with, ingrafted into Christ: For *if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are done away*, 2 Cor. v. 17. Whosoever is not such he hath no interest in the Jesus of that day. He may perchance in some one of those easie Saviours which these times afford, wherein Opinions call'd *holy*, or a *sanctify'd Faction* give such interests, and to *be in a party* is to *be in Christ*; or else he may depend upon that Christ, that may be had with meer Dependance, that is *ours if we persuade our selves he is so*. Now sure, he that is persuaded he is Christ's, is either truly so persuaded or else falsely; if but falsely, that will not advantage him, for God will never save a man for believing a lye; but that he should truly be persuaded so without this Duty is impossible, for *he that is Christ's hath crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts*: therefore by good Logick *he that hath not crucified them is not Christ's*, and evidently *whosoever is not crucified at all, he is not crucified with Christ*.

And sure I need not put you in remembrance, that the man in whom sin reigns, and whensoever his Lusts and Passions bid him go he goeth, or come he cometh, or do this he doeth it, that *the body of sin is not crucified in him*; that which were nailed and fetter'd on the Cross and slain there could not command and rule him so.

Or if sins dominion be not so absolute but God hath got some footing, so as that his Law hath power in the man's mind so as to make him make resistances against his sin, and he dislikes it but alas commits it still, yet what he does allows not, but returns to do it at the next Temptation, afterwards would fain be good yet does not find how to perform, something governs in his members, *leading that Law in his mind into captivity to the law of sin*, this man although he hath *the body of death*, yet 'tis not *crucified and slain*; for it does *live* and exercise the greatest tyranny upon him, forces him to serve and to obey against his mind,

mind, it overcomes his own heart, and all inclinations to good, and conquers God within him: Till men have left off the custom of the works of sin, and all gross deeds of the flesh it were as vain to prove *they are not crucified*, as that *he is alive that walks and eats*. Those works they are the *fruits of the flesh*, the off-spring of its lusts, and were that crucified, and we by likeness to Christ's death planted into the Cross, we could no more produce them, than that *dead Tree* the Cross *could bear fruit*, or than a Carcass could have heat to generate, the Grave become a Womb, or the dust bring forth.

Secondly, Yea more, they perform not the outward actions of life who have but the image of death on them; and a man asleep works not, yet is alive, his fancy and his inwards work; and if sin be onely kept from breaking out, and men commit not gross deeds of the flesh, but yet indulge to these things in imagination and the heart, cherish them in phantse, and design, and wish, onely restrain the practice, or indulge to spiritual wickednesses; you may as well say that a man is dead because he does not walk abroad, because he keeps within doors, and lives only in his Closet or his Bed-Chamber, as say that sin is crucified, which while it *stirs but in the heart, it is not dead*.

Thirdly, Once more, we part from all acquaintance with the dead, the Corps of one that had the same Soul with us; howsoever we may have some throes of grief to leave it, yet we put it from us, we admit it to no more embraces; but if 'twere the loathsome Carcass of a Villain Traytor that was Executed, we turn from the sight as from a Fiend, it is a detestable and accursed spectacle. And so he that hath put his Body of sin to death would have great averfations to it, yea how dear soever it had been, he would no more endure the least acquaintance with it, than he would go seek for his old conversations in the Chambers of Death; he would shun the sight of any the most bosom custom, as he would the Ghost of his dead Friend, he would abandon it as a most ghastly dreadful spectacle; he would also *bury these his dead out of his sight*. Thus he must needs be dispos'd that hath *crucified his Old man*.

And they that are thus *dead with Christ shall also live with him*, yea those that are thus *crucified with him*, he hath already rais'd up together, and hath made them sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus. There already in their cause, and in their right and pledge, and there hereafter in effect and full enjoyment.

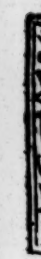
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The Tenth
SERMON,
 Preached at
CHRIST-CHURCH
 IN
OXFORD,

Novemb. 5. 1665.

LUKE IX. 55.

Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of.



THE state of that great Controversie which the words suppose between the *Jews* and the *Samaritans* as it then stood, seems briefly thus: Those that were planted in the Regions of *Samaria* by *Salmaneser*, however great Idolaters at first; having admitted in a while the *God of Israel* among their Gods, and after having an *High Priest* of *Aaron's Line*, a *Temple* too built on that place where *Abraham* and the *Fathers* of the *Hebrews*, friends of God, did chuse to offer Sacrifice; and on that very place where God himself enjoynd the Law and all the Blessings of it to be publish'd to the People, on Mount *Gerezim*; which therefore seem to have pretences to vye with Mount *Zion*, for there also the Lord commanded the Blessing. An Altar too, saith *Benjamin* in his *Itinerary* made of the same stones that God commanded to be taken out of *Jordan* and set up for a memorial of his Peoples passage through it: And besides all this having the Law of *Moses* too; when they had all these pretensions to the *God of Israel*, they clave to him alone, and wholly threw off their Idolatry. So *Epiphanius* does affirm

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1 Joh. iv. 20. Gen. xlii. 6, 7. and 33. 18. compar'd with L'cut. xi. 29, 30. and Judg. ix. 6, 7. Deut. xi. 29. Psalm Cxxxvii. 3. Josh. iv. 9. οἱ δὲ δέξαντες τὸν νόμον τοῦ θεοῦ κατέστησαν τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας καὶ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἐργάσαντες ἐκπαιδεύσαντες. Epiphani. de Samarit. & Scaliger says Andream dicere eos adeo ab omni Idololatria abhorrevere, ut in hac parte Judaeos ipsos superare. vide Auth. de Emen. Tom. I. 7. p. 662. expresly.

Joseph. An. l.
11. c. 8.
Jof. l. 2. contra
Ap. p. 1063.
Edit. G. L.

expressly. And their Countrey being as Josephus says, the receptacle of all discontented fugitive Jews, a great part of it too planted with them by Alexander, they espoused the Worship of the Jews, and came to differ very little either in the Doctrine or the practice of Religion, *τα πάντα ἔχοντες ὡς Ἰουδαίον*, having all things as it were the very same, the only distance seems to be betwixt their Temples, *περὶ ἱερῶν διακρίνοντο*, just as the Woman states it to our Saviour, Job. iv. Our Father worshipped in this Mountain, but ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship: So that if we audit the account of the Samaritan guilt, they separated from the place of Worship which God had appointed, and set up another; in a word, they were Schismatics.

John viii. 48.
John iv. 22.
See Hieron. in
Epitaph Paulæ.

Whether this be such a guilt as should make those terms equivalent *He is a Samaritan and hath a Devil*, I shall not say; but it is such as makes our Saviour say somewhat exclusively, *Salvation is of the Jews*. All the Blessings and Salvations of the Law did indeed hover on Mount Gerizim, were given thence, that was the place of them; but they were cut away when Schism came: The Church is not a place of blessing when 'tis built against the Church; The Altar hath no Horns to lay hold on for refuge, but to push and gore onely, when it is set up against the Altar; And Gerizim is Ebal when it stands in competition with Mount Zion. Well; this onely thing does breed the greatest distances imaginable in the Nations, nothing more divides than Separation and Schism; and then these Samaritans as all Separatists do, grew such Opinionastres and so violent in their way, as to deny humanity to those that would not join with them; they would not grant the Civilities of Passage to one that intended for Jerusalem to worship: They refuse it to our Saviour here because his Face was thitherward, ver. 53: A Schismatick will reject a Christ if his Face be fromward their new Establishment, if he but look towards the Ancient Worship: At this the Sons of Zekedee are offended, zealous for their Master, as being most particularly concern'd in him, two of his nearest intimates; and their zeal would needs break out into flame. And why not? a rudeness to *Elijah* was reveng'd by him with Fire from Heaven, which consumed twice fifty Soldiers and their Captains, though they came to do the King's Command: And shall these hated Schismatics be rude to Thee? and reject the Messiah, and yet go unpunished? Lord, shall we command fire to come down from Heaven to consume them, even as Elias did? Which our Saviour answers with this sharp rebuke, *Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of*.

2 Kings i. 9,
10, 11, 12.

Not to divide but to explain my Text; and so instead of parts present you with some Subjects of Discourse.

Rom. viii. 15.

By Spirit here is meant that disposition and complexure of Christian Piety and Vertues, that course and Method of Religion which the Spirit does prescribe to Christ's Disciples, and does guide them in; or in a word, the temper of the Gospel is so called: And this in opposition to the Law, the difference of these being express'd by a diverse manner of Spirit; the one is called Spirit of Bondage, the other Spirit of Adoption; so here *Ye know not of what Spirit ye are*, ye do not judge aright, if you believe the temper of the Gospel is like that of the Law: The course that I prescribe to my Disciples differs much from that of Prophets under the Old Testament, you must be guided by another Spirit than *Elijah's* was in calling for Fire, if my Spirit dwell in you, For *I came not to destroy mens*

mens lives on any such account. In this sense it affords these Propositions.

First, To destroy Mens lives, or other temporal rights on this account meerly, because they are *Apostates, Schismatics*, or otherwise reject the true Religion, or Christ himself, is inconsistent with the temper of the Gospel. This is that which Christ reproves here, telling them that would do so, *Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of.*

Secondly, Because the Spirit of *Elias*, which the Gospel Christian Spirit here is set in opposition to, oppos'd the Magistrate, destroy'd those that came commission'd from the Prince, and Christ designedly does say ye must not do now what *Elias* did, therefore, to attempt upon or against the Magistrate, on the account of Christ, or of Religion, is inconsistent with the Spirit of the Gospel.

First, Of the first that to destroy mens lives, &c.

But here I must observe, that since these fiery Disciples that did give occasion for our Saviours rebuke, here were no Magistrates, nor did Christ himself that gave the rebuke assume, but renounce openly all such Authority; therefore no observation grounded on these words can controul the Magistrates just Power in punishing Offences done against his Laws, although pretences of Religion and Conscience give colour to those offences; the Gospel does diminish no rights of the secular Powers: Now Supreme Magistrates, though as such they have no right to judge in Articles of Faith, to define what is true Religion, what not; for then the Pagan Princes who had never heard of Christ, and yet are as much Magistrates as any, would have right to judge what Doctrines Christ delivered down to be believed.

Luke xii. 14.
John xviii. 36.

But certainly when Christ Commission'd his Faith to run through all the World not onely independently from all the Powers of it but in perfect opposition to them, they can have no right to judge in that, which whatsoever they shall Judge we are alike bound to receive (the Faith of Christ) without any the least difference to their judgment. But though they have no right to judge of this, they have Authority to determine what Faith shall have the priviledges of their State and what shall not; which shall be publicly profess'd, and which they will inhibit with Penalties: For sure the Priviledges of the State and power of Penalties are the proper rights of the Supreme Power, and therefore none but that can judge and determine of them. In a word, since it is most evident that the tranquillity of a State does depend upon nothing more than the profession and priviledging of Religion; it follows that those Powers to whose Judgment and Decrees the care and Tranquillity of the State is committed, must have the power to judge and to determine what Faith shall be publicly profess'd and priviledg'd by the State: In which Judgment and administration if they err, and priviledg a false Faith and inhibit the true; they use their Power ill, and are responsible to God for doing so, but they do not invade or usurp a Power that is not their own. Rather 'tis most certain if the Principles of any Sect, or else if not they, yet the pursuance of any Principles do tend directly towards, or are found to work Commotions and Treasonable enterprizes, the Supreme Power hath as much right to restrain, yea and Punish them, although with Death according to their several merits, as he hath to punish those effects in any other instances wherein they do express themselves.

Nor

Nor must Religion sectre those practices which it cannot *sanctifie*, but does *envenome*. For by putting an everlasting concern into mens Opinions and actions their undertakings are made by it more desperate and unreclaimable. What Wounds and what Massacres must the State expect from them that stab and murder it with the same Zeal that the Priest kills a *Sacrifice*? that go to act their Villanies with *Devotion*, and go to their own *Execution* as to *Martyrdom*?

'Twere easie for me to deduce the practice of this Power from the best Magistrates in the best times, if that were my business; who had onely this temptation to say thus much, that I might not seem to clash with the Magistrates Power of coercion in Religious causes when I did affirm, that *to destroy mens Lives or other temporal Rights on this account meerly because they are Apostates, Schismaticks, or otherwise reject the true Religion, or Christ himself, is inconsistent with the temper of the Gospel.*

Isai. xi. 6, 7,
&c. & 65. 25.

If you would discover what the temper of the Gospel is, you may see it in its Prophecy and Picture in the Prophet *Isay*, *The Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lye down with the Kid, the sucking Child shall play on the hole of the Asp, and the weaned Child shall put his hand on the Cockatrice den, and the Serpent shall eat the dust.* Whatever mischief these have in themselves, there's nothing of devouring, or of hurt to one another in this state; 'tis like *Paradise restor'd*, the prospect of the Garden of the Lord. Rather whereas *there* these Creatures onely *met*, *here* they *lye down* and *dwell together*: And the *Asp* and *Serpent* that could poyson *Paradise* it self, have now no venomous tooth to *bite*, no not the *heel*, nor spiteful tongue to *biss*.

Gal. iv. 1, 3.

But to speak out of Figure, the Gospel in it self requires not the Life of any for transgression against it self, it calls all into it, and waits their coming; those that sin against it, it useth methods to reform, hath its Spiritual Penalties indeed, whereby it would inflict amendment and Salvation on Offenders: But because final impenitence and unbelief are the onely *breaches* of the *Covenant* of this Religion, therefore it does wait till life and possibilities of Repentance are run out; and then its Punishments indeed come home with interest, but not till then. The Law 'tis true was of another temper, it required the *life* of an *Apostate* to *Idolatry*, whether 'twere a single Person, or a City, *Deut. xiii.* To the Jew that was a *Child*, as *S. Paul* says, and so not to be kept in awe by threats of future abdication, things beyond the prospect of his care, but must have present punishments, the Rod still in his eye; and was a refractory Child that seem'd to have the *Amorite* and *Hivite* derived into him, a tincture of *Idolatry* in his Constitution, that was as ready to run back into the *superstitions* as the *Land of Egypt*, as eager for their *Deities* as their *Onions*, and had the same appetite to the *Calf* and to the *fleshpots*, to make the one a *God*, the other a *Meal*; to such a People Death, that was the onely probable restraint, was put into the Law by *Grd* who was himself *Supream Magistrate* in that *Theocracy*, against whom 'twas exact Rebellion and Treason to take *another God*, and therefore was by him punish'd with Death. But the Spirit whom Christ sends breaths no such threats, for he can come on no Designs but such as Christ can join in, but saith Christ, *I came not to destroy mens lives.*

Secondly,

Secondly, The temper of the Gospel is discovered in its Precepts. I shall name but one, *Matth. v. 43, 44. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour and hate thine Enemy: But I say unto you, love your Enemies, &c.* Where if *Enemy* did not mean the man whom private quarrel had made such, and Him it could not mean, it being said to them that they must love that *Enemy*, *Exod. xxiii. 4, 5.* But, as the *Jews neighbour* was every one of his Religion, and he liv'd near him that lived in the same Covenant with him, so *enemy* being oppos'd to that, must signify one not of his Religion: an *Alien*, an *Idolater*, with any of which they were indeed to have no exercise of love or friendship, no commerce; and to some *Enemies*, the *Canaanites*, no mercy, but they were to hate them to destruction, *Deut. vii.* If so, then our Saviours addition here, *But I say unto you, love your Enemies*, does say that we must love even these; the *Christian* hath no *Canaanites*, but the most profligate adversaries of his Religion he must love, and pray for them although they persecute him: (Which makes appear it does at least include *Enemies of Religion*, for *Persecutions* seldom were on any other ground, and Religion which should have nothing else but Heaven in it, as if it had the malice and the Flames of Hell, breaths nothing else but Fire and Faggot to all those that differ in it.) But whether it be an addition and mean thus or no, since it is sure that both they and we are bound to love the Neighbour, and Christ hath prov'd, *Luke x.* that the *Samaritan*, he whom our two Disciples would consume, that *Schismatick* and *re-jector of Christ* is yet a Neighbour, therefore him also we must love and pray for. Now 'tis a strange way of affection to destroy them, to love them thus to the death, to get admission to their hearts with a *Swords point*, to pray for them by calling for Fire down from Heaven to consume them. *S. Greg. Nazian.* calls the founder of that Faction that began this practice in the Church, *πνευματικὸν λεγιῶνα*, and if so, we know well of what Spirit he is that does call for fire to devour those that differ from him in Religion; 'tis sure one of this Legion, or it rather is the leader of them, that did dwell in Tombs, and does in flames, things which he loves so to inflict; one that was the first Rebel too, which leads me to my second Observation: That

Secondly, To attempt upon, or against the Prince on the account of Christ, or of Religion, is most inconsistent with the Spirit of the Gospel. For it was the Spirit of *Elias* who destroyed those whom the Magistrate did send, that Christ opposes here the Spirit of the Gospel to, in this severe rebuke, *ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of.*

The other warm Apostle meets a greater check in the like case, *S. Peter's* zeal, that they say made him chief of the Apostles, as it made him promptest to confess the Lord, so it did heat him to be readiest to defend him; as fiery to use his Sword as his Tongue for his Master: But his Master will not let a Sword be drawn in his own cause; put up again thy *Matth. xxvi. 52.* Sword into his place: The God of our Religion will not be defended by Treason, and from Murder by the wounding of another, nor will his Religion suffer a Sword out of the sheath against the Power of the Magistrate, no not in behalf of Christ himself; but goes beyond its proper bounds to threaten things that are not Gospel punishments, even execution in this life, to them that do attempt it, *They that take the Sword, Ibid, shall perish with the Sword.* Here the Gospel becomes Law, and turns zealous

lot for the Magistrate though persecuting *Christ himself*. Our Saviour does not think it sharp enough to tell *S. Peter* that he *did not know what Spirit he was of*, for when this Disciple would have kept these sufferings from his Master onely by his counsel, he replies to him, *get thee behind me Satan*: He was then of that manner of Spirit; therefore now that he does so much worse, when he attempts to keep them from him with a Sword, and drawn against the Power, as if *Christ* did not know how to word *what Spirit* such attempts did favour of, he does not check and rebuke now, but threaten and denounce. And 'tis obvious to observe, that this same *Peter* who would needs be fighting for his Master, in few hours with most cursed imprecations forswears him: And so irregular illegal violences for Religion usually flame out into direct opposition to that they are so zealous for; fly in the face of that Religion they pretend to strive for; to let us see they do not rise from Divine Zeal, and from true Piety, but from Hypocrisie, Ambition, Revenge, or Interest; and that *warm shine* that kindles there pretended *Angels of Light*, is but a *flash of Hell*, a *glory about a fiend*. Therefore afterwards none was more forward than *S. Peter* was to press submission to the Magistrate, though most unjustly persecuting for Religion; talks of no Fire but the *fiery trial* then, in *Epist. i. Cap. iv.* and *If ye suffer for the Name of Christ the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you*, he knows *what manner of Spirit* such are of: When they are in the place of *Dragons*, then the *Holy Ghost* and *God* is with them; when the *darkness of the shadow of death* is on their Souls, even then the *Spirit of glory* resteth on them. Accordingly the after-Fathers urge the same not onely towards Heathen Emperours, but relaps'd Hereticks and Apostates: As *Julian*, and *Constantius*, *Vakens*, *Valentinian*; and upon the same account *S. Ambrose* says, *Spiritus Sanctus id locutus est in vobis, Rogamus, Auguste, non Pugnamus*: The Holy Spirit spake these words in you, we beg *O Valentinian*, we oppose not. And *S. Greg. Nazianzen* says, to do so was the *Christian Law* most excellently ordained by the Spirit of God, who knew best to temper his Law with the mixture of what is profitable to us, and honest in it self. They knew what manner of Spirit that of Christianity was: It does assume no power to inflict it self: 'Tis not commission'd to plant it self with violence, or destroy those that refuse or oppose it. It wages War indeed with Vices, not with men: And in the Camp of our Religion as once in *Israel*, there is no Sword found but with *Saul* and *Jonathan his Son*, onely the Princes Sword. Our Spirit is the *Dove*, no Bird of prey that, nor indeed of gall or passion: If Christian Religion be to be writ in Blood, 'tis in that of its own confessors onely; if mens false Opinions make no parties nor mischiefs in the State, we are not to make them Martyrs to their false Opinions; and if they be not so happy as to be Orthodox, send them down to Hell directly: tear out one anothers Souls to tear out that which we think an Errour. Sure they must not root out *smutted Corn* that must not root out *Poppy*; we may let that which is a little blasted grow, if we must let the *Tares* and *Darnel* grow. The Soldiers would not *crucifie Christ's Coat*, nor make a *rent* there where they could find no *seam*: But now men strive so for the *Coat*, that they do rent his *Flesh* to catch it, and to gain an inclosure of the name of Christians tear all other members from the Body of Christ; care not to sacrifice a Nation to a supposed Errour; will attempt to purge away

Matth. xvi. 23.

Matth. xxvi.

74.
The Arians
were the first among
Christians
that persecuted.
See Athanas.
ad solit. vit.
agent. p. 815.
821. & 854.

Verse 12.

Verse 14.

Vid. S. Aug.

in Psal. Cxxiv.

Vid. Athan.

Apol. ad Con-

stant. & Ho.

Epist. ad Con-

stant. in A-

than. Ep. ad

sol. vitam a-

gentes. Tom. 1.

p. 838. Edit.

Paris. 1627.

Vid. Greg.

Naz. Orat.

20. am. Tom. 1.

p. 350. Edit.

Par. 1630.

Vid. Ambr.

pro variis Alli-

onibus Concion.

1. p. 97. Tom.

5. Edit. Pa-

ris. 1632.

l. 2. Ep. 14.

p. 206. Tom. 5.

p. 270. Tom. 1.

I Sam. xiii. 22.

Matth. xiii. 29.

John xix. 14.

way what they call dross in a Furnace of consuming flame: The Christian Spirit's fiery Tongues must kindle no such heats, but his *effusions* call'd *Rivers*, came to quench such fires: *Effusions* that were mistaken for *new wine* indeed, but never look'd like *Blood*. Nor are they that retain to this Spirit, those that have him call'd down on them in their Consecration, impow'erd for such uses. When Christ sent his Disciples to convert the World, *Behold saith he, I send you forth as Lambs among Wolves*: And sure that does not sound like giving a Commission to tear and worry those that would not come into the Flock: The Sheep were not by that impow'erd to devour the Wolves. Our Lords directions to his Apostles when a City would not receive their Doctrine was *shake off the dust of your feet*; let nothing of theirs cleave to you, have no more to do with them; cast off the very dust that settled on your Sandals as you pass'd their Streets. And surely then we must be far from animating to give ruin to, and seize the Sword, the Scepter, and the Thrones of Kings, if they refuse to receive Christ or his Kingdom, or his Reformation, or his Vicar. If I must not have the dust of any such upon my feet, I must not have their Land in my possession, their Crowns on my head, their Wealth in my Coffers, their Blood upon my hands, nor their Souls upon my Sword. It will be ill appearing so when we come to give an account how we have executed our Commission; and shall be ask'd, did I send you to inflict the Cross, or preach it? to save mens Souls or to destroy their lives, yea and Souls too? And when in those Myriads of Souls that have perish'd in the desolations which such occasions have wrought their Blood shall cry from under the Altar, as being sacrific'd to that Duty and Religion which was the utmost that they understood (if so be that there were no Treason to discolour it) and they that did inflict all this appear but *Christian Dioclesians*, and stand at that sad Day in the train of the Persecutions, on the same hand: O then those Fires which these Boutefeus called for and kindled shall blaze out into everlasting burnings!

Luke x. 3.

Matth. x. 14.

Luke x. 11.

And now it may seem strange that they who most of all pretend the *Spirit of Christ*, are yet of the most distant temper in the World from that of *Gospel*; always endeavouring to do that which our Saviour here checks his Disciples for proposing, and did threaten *Peter* for attempting. There are among our selves that seem to live by Inspiration, that look and speak as in the frame of the Gospel, as if every motion were impulse from Heaven: and yet as if Christ had fulfilled his promise to them without Metaphor, *baptized them with the Holy Ghost and fire*, onely that they might kindle fire, and *the unction of the Spirit* did but add Oyl to those flames; as if *the cloven Tongues* of fire in which the *Spirit did descend*, were made to be the Emblems of Division, and to call for fire; these mens *life*, their *garb*, their very *piety* is *faction*: they *pray*, *rebel*, and *murder*, and all *by the Spirit*. 'Tis true indeed they plead now what we seem to say, that they should not be persecuted for not being satisfied in their Conscience; so they mince their breaking of the Laws for which they suffer. But do these know themselves *what manner of Spirit they are of*? or are we bound not to remember when they had the Power how they persecuted all that would not do at once against their *King*, their *Conscience*, and the *Law*? And we do thus far know *what Spirit they are of*, and if they have not yet repented of all

that, then it is plain if they can get an opportunity they will do it again, nay they must by *their Spirit* think themselves obliged to do it.

But these are not all: those that above all the World pretend to the

So the Cardinals, Arch-Bishops, Bishops, and the whole Clergy of France in their general Assembly, in the censure of a Jesuit's Book titl'd Admonitio ad Regem, publish'd at Paris 13. Decem. 1625, say of them that for Religion's sake rebel against their Princes, fidem in factionem convertunt. Alfonso de Vargas relatio de Stratagem. Jesuitarum c. 55. Jerusalem & Babel, or the Image of both Churches. p. 499.

v. g. confitetur maleficus se posuisse pulverem. vel quid aliud sub tali limine & nisi tollatur domum comburendam, Principem interiturum, quotquot urbem ingrediuntur, egressi-enturque in magnam perniciem, aut periculum venturos. Probabilior & tutior, & magis consentanea Religioni, ac reverentia huic Sacramento debita, &c.

Because indeed he does not know, nor ever heard it as a man, or as a part of the commonwealth, or subject of the Government.

Yea and particular provincial Councils, though Bellarmine

names many for my turn. Conc. Rom. 1. & 2um which was justified also they say in Con. Tribur. Quint. Ostiens. Claramont Rom. 7. & 10. Placentin. Rom. 3. Colonien. Rhemens. Claramont. And he names more Popes.

Infallible assistance of the Spirit, our Church is bold in her Offices of this day to say, *do turn Religion into Rebellion*; she said it more severely heretofore, and the attempts of this day warrant the saying, when not like our Disciples that would call for *fire from Heaven* on the Village that rejected Christ, these will raise up *fire from Hell* to consume their own Prince and his Progeny, the whole line of Royalty, the Church and Nation alio in their Representative; and all this onely for refusing

him that calls himself *Christ's Vicar*. There are, I must confess, among them that renounce the practice, and say 'twas the device onely of some few desperate malecontents, wicked Catholics, and design'd by the Devil: And they will allow their Father Garnett to have had no other guilt, but that he did not discover it having received it in Confession. And this gives me occasion to propose a story to your patience and conjectures.

Not long before the time of this Attempt, a Priest of the Society of Jesus in a Book he publish'd, does propose this case of Conscience, *Whether a Priest may make use of what he hath learn'd in Confession to avert great impendent mischiefs to the Government? as for Example, One confesses that himself or some other had laid Gunpowder, and other things under such an House, and if they be not taken thence the House will be burnt, the Prince must perish, all that pass throughout the City will be either certainly destroy'd or in great peril; and resolves it thus. 'Tis the most probable and safe Opinion, and the more suitable to Religion, and to that reverence which is due to the Sacrament of Confession, that it is not lawful to make use of this his knowledg to that end. That his Holiness Clement the 8. had just before by a Bull sent to the Superiours of the Regulars commanded most studiously to beware they make not use of any thing which they come to know by Confession to the benefit of the secular Government. He adds, that in cases of Confession the Priest must not reveal though death be threatned to him, but may say he knows it not, nor ever heard it, quia revera non scit nec audivit ut homo, seu pars reipub. Yea he may swear all this if he but mentally reserve, so as to tell you. 'Tis Del Rio in 6th. Book of his Mag. dis. 1. Cap. Sec. 2.. It seems 'tis safer to break all the Obligations to Allegiance and to truth, his duty and his Oaths, the Princes and Gods bonds, than the Seal of Confession.*

But I did not mention this to let you see the kindness these men have to Princes and their Government: I shall avoid producing any the Opinions of particular persons howsoever horrid in my arguments this day; but I onely ask whether it be not very probable this instance was the thing to be attempted on this day? Whether the resolution was not publish'd, the Pope's Bull if not made yet produc'd at least to caution any Priest that should receive it in Confession, and should be so honest as to abhor the Fact, yet from betraying it and hindring the Execution of it. If it were the case, this was not then any rash attempt of some few desperate malecontents; but a long contrivance and of many heads, and its taking its effect was the great care of their Church.

Well

Well they are even with us yet, and lay as horrid Projects to the charge of *Protestants*. Among our other Controversies this is one, whether are the worie Subjects? bloody sayings are produc'd from Authors on both sides; yea there is the *Image of both Churches, Babel and Jerusalem*, drawn by a Catholique Pen, and then you may be sure all *Babel's* divisions and confusions make the draught of *ours*, and are said to be the issue of the *Protestant Doctrines*: Whereas such things are countenanc'd by some particular Authors of their Church, were never own'd by any *publique Act*, or Doctrine of a *general Council* to which they provoke us. I must confess our Calendar can shew a *thirtieth of January*, as well as a *fifth of November*. There are indeed that say, *the Romanists hatch'd that days guilt*; and challenge any man to call them to account for saying so. But whether so or not; which Churches Doctrines such things are more suited to, I will now put to trial, that we may know *what Spirit each is of*: And I will try it by the *publique Acts and most establish'd Doctrines of the Churches*, and here undertake to shew the *Church of England most expressly does declare against all practices against the Prince for the cause of Religion*. But the *Romish* in those acts wherein she hath most reason to expect *infallibility of Spirit*, also in the *publique Acts of the Church representative*, in *General Councils* does abett the doing them, not onely for *Religion*, but for the *cause of Holy Church*.

See Dr. Du Moulin's answer to Philanax Anglicus p. 59.

First, If the Church of *Rome* have reason to expect infallible assistance of the Spirit in any case, it is as much in *Canonizing of a Saint* as in any other, it being as unhappy to determine a false Object for Religious Worship to their Church as a false Article of Faith; there is as much need that there should be an infallible proposal of the one as other; for when she does Decree by the Authority of the Omnipotent God such a one is a Saint, receiv'd in Glory, and so renders him the Object of their Worship, if he should chance to be a Reprobate; to cause the People to fall prostrate to the Shrine of one that's damn'd, and call his flames to warm Gods Altar and the Votaries breast, to make the whole Church worship one that is in Hell, is liable to greater aggravations of impiety than an erroneous Opinion in very many of their points of Faith can be.

Accordingly the School-men do account it de fide that the Pope cannot err in this.

But it is known their Church hath Canoniz'd one of this Nation, *Becket*, who though he was indeed illegally and barbarously Murthered, yet 'tis not the Suffering, but the Cause that makes the Martyr, now he did not fall a Sacrifice for his Religion, but was slain because he did disturb the State by suspending all the Bishops that upheld the Kings just cause against him, so that neither King nor State could live in peace for him; for opposing also those Laws which himself had sworn to, Laws that were not onely truly Sovereign Rights, but are maintain'd even unto this day as *Priviledges by the Gallican Church*, and they not branded for so doing: In a word, he was slain for those actions which his own Bishops condemned him for, as a perjur'd man and a Traytor: And for persisting in them to the death he was Sainted.

S. Thomas the Martyr.

See Daniel's Hist. of Engl. in the life of Hen. 2. Anno 1170. p. 94. Edit. London. Anno 1634. Idem. Anno 1164. p. 85. Idem. p. 86. Nor are the Jesuits less favourable to F.

Garnet, who was Executed for this treasonable Powder-plot. For Mr. de St. Amour in his Journal Part. 2. c. II. says, that among other Prints of the Pourtraitures of such as were canoniz'd come ayant repandu leur sang pour la Religion Chrestienne, Canoniz'd as having shed their blood for the Christian Religion, one was thus; Pater Henricus Garnetus Anglus Londini pro fide Catholica suspensus & sectus. 3 Maii 1606. Adding that these Prints are made avec permission des Superieurs.

Christe Jesu per
Thoma vulnera
que nos ligant
relaxa scelerum.
Jesu bone per
Thome merita
nostra nobis di-
mitte debita.
Portitor. seu
Breviar. ad u-
sum Eccles.
Sarum.

See Daniel's
Hilt. Anno
1172. p. 99.

Fac nos Christe
scandere quo
Thomas ascen-
dit, Hanc pre-
camus Assequa-
mur ut Thomæ
consortium.

Missal. ad us.
Eccles. Sar.
Rom. xlii. 2.

Habetur Sen-
tentia. Concil.
Tom. 28. p.

424. Edit. Reg.
Par. An. 1644.

Cum fratribus
nostris & sacro

concilio deliberatione habitâ diligenti. p. 431.

Constanter igitur & acerrime in pleno & jam plenissimo Concilio Impe-
rator Fred. quasi toti Ecclesie contumax & Rebellis à 4. Mundi partes Inhabitantibus accusatur. p. 457.

Dominus
Papa Sententiam Excommunicationis in pleno Concilio non sine omnium audientium stupore & horrore terribili fulgura-
vit. p. 461.

Dominus Papa & Prelati assidentes Concilio candelis accensis in dictum Imperatorem — terribiliter
fulgurarunt. p. 463.

Prelati omnes candelas suas accensas inclinarunt & extinxerunt excommunicationem Impe-
ratorem deponentes. Matt. Par.

Nonne igitur hæc non levia sed efficacia sunt argumenta de suspitione Heretis con-
tra eum. Con. tom. 28. p. 431.

Omni honore & dignitate — sententiando privamus; omnes qui ei iuramento fideli-
tatis tenentur astricti à juramento hujusmodi perpetuo absolventes: Auctoritate Apostolica inhibendo, &c. Ibid. p. 431.

Pitav. Rationar. temporum. l. 9. c. 1. parie prima. p. 457. Edit. Par. Anni. 1652.

Celebrated in the year of our
Lord 1215. in which 412.
Bishops, &c. Can. 3. Con.
Tom. 28. p. 161. Ut ex tunc
ipse vasallos ab ejus fidelitate
denunciat absolutos, & ter-
ram, &c. Ib. Modo super hoc
ipse nullum præstet obstacu-
lum, nec aliquod impedimen-
tum opponat, eadem nihilominus
lege servata circa eos
qui non habent Dominos tem-
porales. Can. eodem.

Now whatever the estate of this man be in the next World, (I meddle not with that;) Yet for Disobedience and Rebellion to place one in Heaven, whence for those things *Lucifer* did fall; does seem to shew what Spirit they are of that Canonize such Saints: For the Church to pray to Christ that by the wounds of this Saint he would remit their sins, does express what rate their Church does set upon the merits of resisting Princes, and disturbing States in the behalf of Holy Church: When such actions make men fit to be joynt purchasers with Christ in the Redemption of the World. But when the French Histories say 'twas disputed long after in Paris whether he were Damnd or Sav'd, that the Church in her publique Offices should pray to go thither where he is gone to have his Society; though it express their most infallible assurance of the condition of those men, who for their sakes resist the Secular Powers, yet O my Soul! enter not thou into their counsels in this world, neither say a Confederacy to whom they say a Confederacy: much less pray to be in their Society, who by resisting S. Paul says, do receive unto themselves Damnation.

Secondly, It is notorious that in their first General Council at Lyons, Anno 1245. the Emperour Frederick the second, by the Sentence of the Pope and the whole Council after long deliberation and producing several Arguments which they say are not sleight, but effectual to prove the suspicion of Heresie, is depriv'd of his Empire, all his Subjects are absolv'd from their Oath of Allegiance, and by Apostolical Authority forbidden to obey him: Therefore that such things may be done in the cases of Religion hath the Authority of a General Council, 'twas that Council that Decried Red Hats to Cardinals: Hats red it seems not onely with the Royal Purple, but with the Blood of Kings and of Royalty it self.

Thirdly, I should have urged the well known Canon of the General Council of Lateran, (the greatest their Church ever boasted of) which says, That if the temporal Lord shall neglect to purge his Territories from such as the Church there declares Hereticks, he shall be Excommunicated by the Metropolitan, and if he do not mend within a year complained of to the Pope, that so he may declare his Subjects absolv'd from their Allegiance, and expose his Lands to be seiz'd by Catholics; who shall exterminate the Hereticks, saving the right of the chief Lord: Provided he give no impediment to this. But the same law shall be observed to those that have no chief Lords; that is, who are themselves Supream.

This I should urge, but that some say that penal Statutes which are *leges odiosæ, tantum disponent, quantum loquuntur*: Therefore this Canon since it does not name Kings, it does not, they say, concern them, although 'tis plain it do sufficiently enough. But that there may be therefore no evasion,

Fourthly,

Fourthly, In the *General Council of Constance*, that part of it I mean that is approv'd by their whole Church. The Pope and Council joyn together in commanding all Arch-Bishops, Bishops, and Inquisitors to pronounce all such Excommunicate as are declared Hereticks in such and such Articles (and that of *Transubstantiation*, *half-Communion*, and the Pope's Supremacy are among them) or that favour or defend them, or that Communicate with them in publique or in private, whether in sacred Offices or otherwise; *etiamsi Patriarchali, Archiepiscopali, Episcopali, Regali, Reginali, Ducali, aut aliâ quâvis Ecclesiasticâ, aut mundanâ præfulgeant dignitate*: And Commands them also to proceed to *Interdicts*, and deprivation of Dignities, and Goods, and whatsoever other Penalties, *vias & modos*. Thus that Council though it took away the Peoples right to the Blood of Christ, denying them the Cup in the Sacrament, gave them in exchange the Blood of their own Kings, making them a right to that.

After Martin V. was made Pope. Sacro approbante Concilio. Constant. per Apostolica scripta committimus & mandamus Concilio. Tom. 29. p. 613. p. 617. 626. l. p. 626. p. 628. Though they be Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, Kings, or Queens, or

Dukes, &c. Per excommunicationis suspensionis & interdicti non privationis dignitatum personatum — & etiam bonorum ac dignitatum secularium — & per alias penas, vias & modos. p. 629. The same Mandate also does in p. 614. enjoin them to require the Emperours, Kings, Dukes, &c. to expel those Hereticks from their Dominions; see tenorem Lateran. Concilii quod incipit sicut ait. Namely cap. 27. of the General Council of Lateran under Alex. 3. which Canon threatens thus. Relaxatos se noverint à debito fidelitatu & homini ac totius obsequii — quicunque illis aliquo pacto tenentur annexi. Conc. Tom. 27. p. 461. Also in the 17 Sess. of the Council of Constance under John 21. Conc. Tom. 29. p. 458. The Council does define expressly Excommunication and deprivation to Kings also. Hæc sacrosancta Constant Synodus Ecclesiam Catholicam representans in spiritu sancto legitime congregata, statuit. definit. & ordinatu quod quicunque, cujuscunque status ac conditionis existat etiamsi Regalis Cardinalatus, &c. — Sententiam Excommunicationis auctoritate hujus S. Concilii general. ipso facto incurrat — & ulterius omni honore & dignitate sit ipso facto privatus.

And that they extend the force of these Canons to the most absolute Princes, even to him that pleads exemption most, to the King of France is plain, because when Sixtus the fifth thundred out his Bulls against the then King of Navarre, afterwards King Henry the fourth of France, and the Prince of Conde, depriving them not onely of their Lands and Dignities, but their Succession also to the Crown of France, absolving their Subjects from their Oaths, forbidding them to obey them, he declared he did it to them as to relapsed Hereticks, favourers and defenders of them, and as such fall'n under the Censures of the Canons of the Church. Now there are no other Canons that do take in Kings but these which can touch him, for that of Boniface the eighth which says the Pope hath power to judg all temporal Powers, is declared not to extend to France. Cap. meruit. de priviledg. in extravag. communibus.

Les declarant heretiques relaps, chefs, fauteurs & promoteurs de l'heresie come tels tombes dans les censures & les

peines y portées par les loix & les Canons, priver eux & leur descendans des toutes terres & dignités, incapables de succeder à quelque Principauté que se soit, spécialement au Royaume de France. Absout leurs Subjects du serment de fidelité & leur defend de leur obeir. Histoire du Roy. H. le Grand. parl' Evêque de Rhodex. ad annum. 1585. p. 68. & v. p. 71. Edit. Amst. anno 1661. Cap. unam sanctam de Major & obedientia in extra. Com.

Thus by the publique Acts of their Church, and by the Canons of their General Councils we have found in causes of Religion Deprivation of Princes, Wars and Bloodshed, and the other consequent Miseries are established; Rebellion encouraged by a Law: And if Rebellion be as the sin of Witchcraft then we know what manner of Spirit they are of that do encourage it; sure Witches have no spirit but the Devil for familiar.

1 Sam. xv. 23.

But the Church of England on the other side, in her publique Doctrine set down in the Book of Homilies, established in the 39. Articles of her Religion, says in exprefs words, that it is not lawful for Inferiours and Subjects

Subjects in any case to resist and stand against the Superiour Powers: that we must indeed believe undoubtedly that we may not obey Kings, Magistrates, or any other, if they would command us to do any thing contrary to Gods Commands. In such a case we ought to say with the Apostle, we must rather obey God than Man. But nevertheless in that case we may not in any wise withstand violently, or Rebel against Rulers, or make any Insurrection, Sedition, or Tumults, either by force of Arms or otherwise, against the Anointed of the Lord, or any of his Officers, 1 Book of Hom. 2 part of the Serm. of Obed. Not for Reformation of Religion; for what a Religion 'tis that such men by such means would restore, may easily be judged even as good a Religion surely as Rebels be good men, and obedient Subjects. 2 Book of Hom. 4 part of the Serm. against wilful Rebellion. The very same thing is defined in the first of the Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical of the year 1640. for Subjects to bear Arms against their King, offensive, or defensive, upon any pretence whatever, is at least to resist the Powers which are ordain'd of God: and though they do not invade but onely resist, S. Paul tells them plainly, he that resists receives unto himself damnation. This was the Doctrine of the Church in those her Constitutions; and although there was no Parliament then sitting to enact these Canons into Laws, yet since that time the Law of England is declar'd to say the same; and we obliged by it to acknowledg, that it is not Lawful upon any pretence whatsoever, to take up Arms against the King, by this Parliament, whose memory shall be for ever blessed.

*Subscription to
the Act for
uniformity.
14 Car. 2.*

And now it is not hard to know what manner of Spirit our Church is of, even that Spirit that anoints the Lords Anointed, that is, which Commissions them, Gods Spirit, as we find it phras'd in Scripture: And 'tis obvious to each eye that there is much more resemblance betwixt present Rome, and the Image of Babylon, as S. John hath drawn it in the Revelations, than there is of Babel and the Church of England, as to those Confusions which seditious Doctrines make, as the Romanists pour-trai'd her.

But far be it from me to conclude hence that all of their Communion do allow their Doctrines: Though they stand on the same bottom that their Faith of half-Communion, and Transubstantiation do; even Acts of the same Councils, yet I doubt not multitudes of loyal Souls of this our Nation do abhor the Tenents, by what Rule of theirs I know not I confels. Nor shall I enquire what Security a Prince can have of the Allegiance of those, who by the most infallible Rules of their Religion can be loyal onely on Condition, by the leave of those who are his Enemies, on whose will and power all their Oaths and duty are depending. If the most essential interest of Princes will not move them to consider this, sure I am I shall not undertake it: But I shall take the confidence out of the premises to infer, that no Religion in the World does more provide for the security of Kings, than the Christian as it is profess'd in our Church does. And when we see the Interest of the Crown and Church were twist-ed by God in the preservations of this day, nor could be separated in the late dismal Confusions, but died and reviv'd together in the Resurrection, they that hate the execrable mischiefs of those times, or love the Crown, or do not come to mock God when they come to give him thanks for his great glories of this day, cannot choose but have good will for our Sion, cannot have an unconcernedness for this Religion, a cold

cold indifference to it or any other; which where-ere it is, alas I fear betrays too openly *indifference* and *unconcernedness* for *Religion it self*. For if I should appeal to our most Sceptick Statists, and not beg one Principle of a Religion, but take their own: *Religion was contriv'd*, they say, *by pretending to engage a God to uphold his Vicegerent, and by putting after, everlasting punishments before mens fears*, (for they saw present ones restrained not Treason) was contriv'd I say, *to uphold States*: Then that must be the *best* with them that *best upholds*, and then I have evinc'd the *Christian* is secure, as 'tis *profess'd by our Church*. But then shame to those who to gratifie their lusts meerly, labour to perswade themselves and others there is no such thing in earnest as a *Resurrection to punishments*: who by publique raillery in sacred things, and turning all to merriment, endeavour to take off the sence of all Religion, and have done it in great measure; and so thrown down the best Basis on which Government subsists: which they themselves confess was necessary to be fram'd on purpose for it. For if there be no after fears, he that is stronger than to need to fear the present may rebel, kill Kings.

These Atheists are Fanaticks, I am sure in Politicks; more traitorous than our mad Enthusiasts, or than the Canons of the Popish Councils: To these Sadduces in Christianity we may say, *ye know not what spirit ye are of, who know not whether there be any Spirit*. But it is indeed because they are all flesh themselves: But then if the works of the flesh be manifest, *Adultery, Fornication, Seditions, Heresies, Murders, Drunkenness, &c.* we know what manner of Spirit they are of; even the spirit that did enter into the Swine, the Legion indeed of Spirits, one Spirit is not Devil enough to animate the flesh into so many of those works. But the fruits of the Spirit that Gospel Spirit which we Christians are of, are love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, joy in the Holy Ghost; and they that do bring forth such fruits are baptised indeed with the Holy Ghost; and if with fire, fire that came down from Heaven too, 'twas onely to consume their dross that they may be pure mettall, fit as for the King's Inscription, meek Christians, good Subjects, so for Gods Image to be stamp'd upon, that is, renewed in Righteousness and true Holiness. Fire this that will sublime our very flesh into spiritual body, that we may begin here that incorruptible which our corruptible must put on, when our vile Bodies shall be made like to the glorious Body of our Saviour: To which state that Spirit which rais'd up Jesus from the dead bring us, by quickning our mortal Bodies.

Acts xxiii. 8.

Gal. v. 19, 20,

21.

Ver. 22, 23.

To whom, &c.

The

The Eleventh
SERMON,
 Preached at
CHRIST-CHURCH
 IN
OXFORD,

Novemb. 8. 1665.

Being the Monthly Fast-day for the Plague.

LUKE XVI. 30, 31.

Nay Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.—

And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.



THAT God who purchas'd for us the possibilities of Repentance with the Son of his Bosom, and requires nothing more in exchange of the Blood and Life of Christ, but some unfeigned tears and reformation of our lives, that *He* should be contriving methods to bring men to Repentance is nothing strange; for this is but to take care that all that ever he hath done for them be not in vain and lost: But that in *Hell*, a place which nothing but Repentance can destroy; there should be such designs seems strange, yet not if we consider the condition of the place, whose Torments are not onely of so dire a nature, that he that is condemned to them would be alone in them, but were made so dire on purpose that they might be preservatives against themselves; nothing

nothing being judged more effectual to terrifie men from those pains, than the exceeding greatness of those pains, which he that feels thinks the relation alone will do; for he said, *Nay Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent, &c.*

The words do willingly suggest occasion for several Inquiries, and some of those of the nicer and more curious kind, but truly I shall not attend to those suggestions, but shall chuse to handle some few of the most obvious and popular Considerations that the words break into, and they are three.

First, The Rich man's Charity to his Brethren, his unsatisfied desire and care that they may be brought to Repentance, expressed in these words, *Nay Father Abraham, though they have Moses and Prophets, yet let them have one method more.*

Secondly, We have here his choice of that *method*, that which he thought would do though nothing else would; in these words, *If one went unto them from the dead they will repent.* In the handling of which, we shall examine what the grounds were upon which this Rich man was so confident that that would work upon them; and here we find he chose with several advantages.

First, *One from the dead;*

Secondly, That one *Lazarus*; and he

First, *One out of Abraham's Bosom:*

Secondly, One that had seen him also in his Torments and could *testifie* of them, v. 27.

Thirdly, We have here these fancied hopes all dash'd in *Abraham's* answer, *And he said unto him, if they believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be perswaded though one rose from the dead.*

First of the first, the Charitable, careful contrivances this Rich man in Hell had for his Brethren upon Earth: *Nay Father Abraham, &c.*

It is commonly reported of men who know themselves infected by the Plague, that they desire to infect as many others as they can; they contrive to spread the Contagion, and love society of Ruin; and we are sure it is so in that Plague of the Soul, *Sin*. This humour did not content it self to debauch *Heaven*, and unpeople *Paradise*, but all the Ages of the World make up its Triumph, and every sin that ever was, and misery that shall be, is its issue. *Lucifer's* pride would have a train of *Angels* and *Mankind* to wait upon him in Destruction: And in such an attendance, though to his everlasting cost, he does still pride himself; he feeds upon that Envy that devours him, and cheers himself with adding fuel to his flames that do torment him; and upon this account enjoys his own *Agonies* and *God's Indignation*: And then it is no wonder if his Agents upon Earth enjoy the sport; and if the Devil does not more please himself to see his Dominions enlarg'd and the business of Hell go forward, than wicked men do in having others become like themselves; as if they did derive to themselves, and possess the pleasure, as they do the guilt of those whom they draw in; and the delight like the sin, were *all in all, and all in every part* of the whole Company that joyn in wickedness. But it should seem 'tis otherwise with the Sinners in Hell. Our Rich man here when he saw his own estate remediless, so vast a gulf betwixt him and the Bosom of Comfort, that not the least drop of refreshment, no not the hopes nor wishes of it could pass

pass thence to him; but Torment sealed upon him by an irreversible Decree; he begins then to contrive for his Brethren, how their falling into the like estate with him might be prevented, *ver. 27, 28.* Nor satisfied with this, when *Abraham* replies, they are provided well enough, *they have Moses and the Prophets*, the one Preaching the Law to them, whose *Rules* they have made as familiar to them as their *dress*, they put on daily Gods Commandments, and their duty; make his Precepts their *frontlets* and their *wristbands*. And the other the *Prophets*, are Commissioned from God to lay before their eyes the issue of transgressions, give them a *vision* of the Judgments that await their sins, and come to them burdned with the foreknowledg of the Sinners expectations; so that except they will resolve to chuse destruction wilfully to assault their own perdition, there is no fear they should come thither; those tell them as much as any from the dead can do: Ah! but thinks he, all those methods I had, yet I am here; and then let them have one other; for as now after this little tast of Torments were I to live again, I should most certainly avoid this place, and lead another kind of life than that which does expire into this *Tophet*; So if one went to tell them how it is with me, sure then they would repent and not come hither; therefore I pray thee send; *Nay Father Abraham, &c.*

I cannot here assent to Cardinal *Cajetan's* account that all this earnestness was onely pride in our Rich man, and a desire to have the glory of his Family advanc'd; which as he laboured to raise here by Wealth, so now finding by sad experience that was but a weak foundation to build a lasting House upon, and that all the shine of it was but false treacherous light, such as did end in flame with him; and having made discovery of other greater glories, that *Abraham* and *Lazarus* possess'd, he would have his Family as high and bright as they; and this their Repentance, which he took such care for, was but in order to that exaltation.

If it were so, truly it is the first pride I ever read of that would content it self with no meaner a dress than the Robes of Immortality, and was ambitious of the Throne of Glory. I have heard I confess of a proud lowliness, where the humility is but the manage and the art of being lofty, is onely assum'd condescension whereby men but descend to be extol'd, and stoop to take advantage for their mount: But never heard of any pride that aimed to raise it self by the humiliations of Repentance, that laid its groundwork in that dust and ashes, cloath'd it self in the sackcloth and neglected rudenesses of a pious penitent sorrow: The prides of this side Hell are of a different garb I'm sure, if theirs be such; if they design by those just means to settle the inheritance of Heaven in their Families, sure the *vices of Hell* may be fit patterns for our *Religious performances*, and 'twere to be desired that all Christians had this mans ardenscies and flames in their affections to their Houses.

Yet neither can I from this one particular instance draw any general proposition concerning the kindness of that place to Sinners upon Earth, although all those that make this History not Parable would give me colour for it: But waving that, since Christ hath so framed the *Διατίθησις*, (which is a relation of such words as they would have spoke, had they spoke on this occasion) I shall take that as ground enough to apply it to the conviction of those who are so far from these Charitable

designs to the Souls of others, that they contrive nothing more than how to have the company of their Friends in those ways that lead to this place of Torment; prevail with them to join in sinning, and shew a Vice how to insinuate into them.

The kindneses of our man here in the flames were divine God-like Charities compared to these. Our Saviour says, *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven*, Matth. xviii. 10. Which one expounds, *if we neglect to do what is in our power to preserve the meanest Christians from Vice, and sleight their sinning, their Tutelary Angels that have continual recourse to God, and are high in his favour, will make complaints of us in their behalf, at least they will if we offend them, and any action of ours prove an occasion of their sins.* And if a favourite of Heaven shall accuse us to the Lord for that, Then how will he complain of us when we tempt? when he shall have to say against us, that we have ensnared and drawn such a Soul into a Custom that will ruin it eternally; and when he shall bring against us an instance out of Hell here, and the kindneses of one among the Devils shall come in Judgment against us; where we see the Rich Man thought not of his own condemnation so much he thought of the averting that of his Brethren. We might suppose a man in his condition could not consider any thing but his own Tortures. O yes, to preserve others from them; yet, when the man in Hell does so, the men on Earth do think of nothing more than to entice others into them. And is it not a strange Age then, when to tempt is the onely mode of kindness, and men do scarcely know how to express themselves civil to their Friends but by pressing them to sin and so be sick with them? as if this were the gentile use of Societies, to season Youth into good Company; and bring the Fashionable Vices into their acquaintance.

And 'tis well if they stay there; it happens so that Parts and Wit, Faculties and Acquisitions do ingratiate men into these treacherous kindneses, and qualifie them for the desires and friendships of such persons as entertain them by softning them into *looseness* and then into *prophaneness*; debauch their *manners*, and then their *Principles*; teach them to sport themselves with *Vice*, and then with *Holy things*, and after with *Religion it self*; which is a greater *Luxury* than that their Riots treat their Appetites withal, the *Luxury of Wit*. And thus they educate them into *Atheism*, and these familiar Devils are call'd Acquaintances and Friends: And indeed the Companions in sin a man would think should be dear Friends, such as pour an heart into one another in their common Cups, shed Souls in their Lusts, are friends to one another even in ruin, and love to their own Condemnation, are kind beyond the *Altar-flames*, even to those *everlasting fires*; such communications certainly cement affections so that nothing can divide them: And let them do so, but *Lord send me the kindness of Hell rather*, one that will be a friend like this man in his Torments, that with unsatisfied cares minded the reformation of his Friends, *Nay Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent*; which brings me to the *Choice*, the second thing.

If a Ghost should indeed appear to any of us in the midst of our Commissions, it would certainly hurry us from our Enjoyments; and there are no such ties & unions by which the advantages of sin do hold us fix'd and

and jointed to them, but the shake and tremble we should then be in, would loosen and dissolve them all, and make us uncling from them, if we may believe discourses that tell us such a sight is able to startle a man however he be fix'd by his most close Devotions; for what the Jews were wont to say, *we shall die because we have seen an Angel of the Lord from Heaven*, most men do fear if they should see the Spirit of a dead man from the Earth. Indeed the affrights which men do usually conceive at the meer apprehension of such an Apparition, do probably arise from a surprise, in being minded hastily of such a state for which they are not then prepared so as they would wish or hope to be, to which they think that is a Call, for *we shall die* said the Jews.

But not to ask the reason of this now, but find the reason why our Rich Man thinks when *Moses and the Prophets* cannot make a man repent, such a Ghost should: We have it in ver. 28, they do but discourse to us, but one from the dead could testify, he could bear witness that it is so as they say, speak his own sight and knowledge, and therefore though they hear not *Moses and the Prophets*, yet if one went unto them from the dead they will repent. For

First, One from the Dead could testify that *when we die we do not cease to be*; and he would make appear that our departing hence is not annihilation, and so would dash the hopes of *Epicures*, such as I was, and I may fear they are; who as they live like Beasts do think to die so too: and who are rational in this alone that they desire to be but *Animal*. And all the rest of men whether worldly or sensual, that enclose their desires and enjoyments within this life, and above all the *Atheist* that dares not look beyond it, all these would be convinc'd by such an evidence. Indeed this would take away the main encouragement of all ungodliness, which upon little reasonings how thin soever, that there's no life after this does quicken and secure it self, *Wisd. 2.* and therefore every Sect of men that did prescribe Morality did teach an after-life, nothing was more believ'd among the Heathen; Their Tribunal below, where three most severe Judges were appointed, meant the same thing with our last Assize, and their *Elizian fields* were but *Poetical Paradise*, their *Phlegethon*, River of Fire, was set to express our *stream of Brimstone flame*: Thus *Resurrection in fable made them vertuous*; the guests at it made *Socrates* die chearful, and though his hopes had faint weak Principles they had *Heroick almost Martyr resolutions*.

And on the other side, of those that among them deny'd an after-life, though we are told that *Epicurus* was a vertuous man, yet his Sect did give name to Vice; and is still the expression for it, and all that did espouse the Tenents of it, did the Vices too; the *Sadduces* among the Jews are call'd *Epicures*, not onely for Opinions sake, because they did make God a body, and totally denyed his Providence, as *Zakuth* says, but *Epicures* also for their practice sake; For they used to scoff at the *Pharisees* for afflicting themselves by Fasting and Austerities in this life, ἐξω τῶ δεινῶ τῷ κακῶν ἢ ἐποτρύνειν
ἰσθῆναι
Joseph de Bell.
Jud. l. 2. c. 12.
Edit. Basil.
περὶ ἀλλήλων τὸ ἡθὸς ἀγνοοῦντες
Ibid.
Πυχῆς τὴν διαμονὴν καὶ τὰς κατὰ αὐτὰς πνευματικὰς καὶ π
μίας ἀναστροφῆς
Ibid.

כלום רב עלום הכה אין להם when there is nothing at all of recompence for them in any life to come. Yea and *Josephus* says of them they were the worst of all Sects, living like savage Beasts towards one another, and uncourteous to their own Sect as to strangers; and this, says he, was but a natural effect of their Opinion, which wholly denied the Immortality of the Soul, and all Rewards and Punishments after this Life; which Principle

ciple one coming from the dead would rectify, and so contribute to Repentance. Especially if

Secondly, That one were *Lazarus*, if he that at the *Supper of the Lamb* sits next the *Father of the faithful*, and the *friend of God*, in one of the higher Seats of *Paradise*, in *Abraham's Bosom*; if he would go and speak his knowledge of the Pleasures of that Bosom which he tastes, and of the glories of that Place, and but compare them with the little gayeties of my Fathers House; shew them the difference betwixt their *Structures* and that *Foundation whose builder and maker God is*, betwixt the entertainments of their riotous Palats, and the Festivals of the Blessed Trinity, then sure they would disrellish those, and catch at these, which do exceed them by a whole Infinity, and will out-live them an Eternity. And here should I attempt, what he would have had *Lazarus* perform, to dash out the blessedness of that place, making the *first draught* of them with notions of delight, not such as the Understanding cannot apprehend, but such as seize the heart with pleasure in this Life, and that give it the strongest agitations here; and sweetning that by those transcendencies which I could fill it up with, and should I raise it then with shadow, evince that reason, though it cannot fathom, can yet by sure Discourse conclude the greatness of those Glories, which I would leave for your expectations to loose themselves into; should I attempt all this I were an insolent undertaker. Yet were it very easie to describe them so as that viewing them with the things below, these would vanish in the comparison. And to do so much was the utmost that our Rich Man could design by sending *Lazarus*, who if he could have been believ'd might probably have done the work; for if *Faith* did but do what *Lazarus* did, look into *Abraham's Bosom*, were it but turn'd into a little *Vision*, and but as clear an evidence of things not seen as eye-sight hath of its temptations, had the spiritual Object but that advantage the carnal hath of being present, (now it is the work of *Faith* to give it that advantage) sure it would be impossible for the sensitive Objects, the pleasures or the Profits of this World, which are so far inferiour to the other in desireableness, and onely make advantage of their being present, when the other is so far off, 'twould be impossible for them to gain our wills consent at any time; and therefore when those glories shall be present to the Soul, 'twill be impossible for any other Object to steal, or ravish, any way to engage one thought away from them: In Heaven they cannot wilth to sin. Nay the flash alone of that glory fascinates the heart; *Peter, and James, and John*, saw but a glimpse of it, and that transfigur'd too, (onely the other way that *Moses* and *Elias* were, for the glory suffered an exinanition) and they but wak'd into the sight of it, so that 'twas but an apparition of Heaven; and yet they never would have left the place which it once lightned, *Master it is good for us to be here*, let us go down no more, never converse with any thing beneath *Mount Tabor*, but let us build three Booths, such Tents would be like that which He hath spread, and such Booths be some of the many Mansions of his House, who spreadeth out the Heavens for a Tent for himself to dwell in. But the truth is while men do onely hear of Joys above, and have but thin neglected notions of them, and on the other side a sense of present profits, pleasures, honours which the World affords, they will not be affected with the future dry hopes of those as with all these in present,

sent, will not have as effectual a tast of the *Supper of the Lamb*, as of their own *delicious daily fare*, nor be as much wrought upon by the Promises of being *Cloath'd upon* with the white Robe of *Immortality*, and by the mentions of a *Crown*, although of *Glory*, as they are pleas'd with their own *Royal Purples*, they have much surer Conviction of the delights of present things, than of those far removed futurities; but now if *Lazarus* would go from *Abraham's Bosom*, he might Convince them from his own Experience, and then *they would Repent*. Especially

Thirdly, because *Lazarus hath seen me in my Torments*, and can give account of them, wherefore *I pray thee Father Abraham send him*, for if *such an one* went unto them from the Dead, one that could testifie of this place, he would tell them such sad stories of my condition here, how in lieu of all my *sumptuous fare* I have nothing now but *gnashing of teeth*, *streams* indeed of *Brimstone*, and a *lake of fire*, but *everlasting feaver of thirst* for my delicious intemperate Palate; my short-liv'd sins turn'd to eternal Agonies; sure this would prevail with them to cut off their sins by Repentance, before Death cut off their sin and them together; and so they might prevent the coming hither. And very probably it might have taken; for upon such Conviction 'tis hard not to resolve to change, for who is he that can resolve thus with himself, *well I will now content my self with everlasting Condemnation and this sin*, for *I see they are consequent*, now *this I cannot leave therefore let the other come*; they that were once affected with the apprehensions of the greatness and the certainty of that Damnation cannot resolve thus, and therefore we see fewer men adventure to transgress *Man's Law*, whose Punishment is near and most assur'd, than *God's Commandments*. And when their fears of the Lords Judgments stare them in the face, they quickly tremble into the terrours and the agonies of Penitence. For who dares sin, and who does not repent upon his Death-bed? he sinks at the remembrance of his former draughts, when he does apprehend his next is like to be in the Infernal Lake, he hath the frost of the Grave on him when he but thinks of his lascivious heats, and does think too that his hot lustful Bed will turn him off straight into *Tophet*: And then if *Lazarus* could raise these apprehensions in them, *sure they would repent*. 'Tis plain these were the grounds our Rich Man built this his request upon, I do not lay them as infallible, I make no question but that men are able to defie their knowledg, and charge through their own belief to sin and to destruction; but commonly men do not lay things deep enough to their heart to be thoroughly convinc'd in earnest, and thus he believed; for had *Abraham* granted his desire, and sent *Lazarus* to testifie the Glories he had tasted in himself, and the Torments he had seen their Brother in, all he could hope from this was but to make them more believe the one and other; therefore he thought for want of this they would miscarry, and this alone would do it; so that we may conclude, that in the judgment of one that dy'd without Repentance, having resisted all God's Methods, and knew upon what score he did it, and suffered the deserved pains of so doing; the reason why men do not repent, is because they are not sufficiently convinc'd of the next Life, and of its two Eternities of Joy and Torment, they do not credit them, but notwithstanding all that God hath done his truths want witnessing, for if one went unto them from the Dead, one that could testifie, they would Repent.

I should

I should now make reflections on this and our selves together, and truly all this would bespatter foully such as go on in a Vice, for it does conclude concerning them that they do not believe Gods Truths, but in the midst of their professions of Religion are Infidels; 'tis plain they are so in the acknowledgments of one of their own Tribe, who in the anguish of his Torments does confess this of them from his own experience: But worse things will appear when we have seen that God hath done all this to us with more advantage than this man in Hell did think sufficient, or indeed desire; which was my next undertaking, and I shall manage it in the same order.

First, *If one went unto them from the dead, says he, they will Repent.* And now to answer that, *Christ is come from the dead*; an Article this is that made its way through all the Swords, and all the Racks, and torturing Engines that the powerful witty malice of a whole World could find out and execute: And shall it find its death among the softs and glories of its own victorious profession? when it was instant Ruine to acknowledge the belief of it, then Myriads ran into the flames, at once to own and to partake *Christs Resurrection*: but now they that profess it are so well here in this Life, that in defiance of their own profession, they will not think there is another Life.

It is not out of Principle they doubt (as it were easie to demonstrate) but out of improbity; They have an aversion to severe Piety, and are uneasie under any thing that does engage to it, and must therefore work themselves out; and here they storm; Unkind men to themselves! not onely in imprudence, who adventure all upon such hazards; but in disparaging themselves, who being men of reason, and that set it up to such an height as to make it contend with God, and dispute out his Power of raising them again, yet can think such a reasoning Soul was given them for no other end but to procure for, and to animate the Organs of their sensuality. But this is dash'd if *Christ be risen*, because *His Resurrection did make Faith that he would Judge the World in Righteousness, on purpose to make them Repent*; Acts xvii. 20, 21. So that this his first expectation is most fully answered to us.

But Secondly, if *Lazarus* would go, one out of *Abraham's Bosom* then *they would Repent*. And hath there not a greater than *Lazarus* been with us? one not out of *Abraham's* but *Gods Bosom*? even the Son of his Bosom, one that himself prepar'd those Joys for them that would believe him and obey him: one that from all Eternity enjoy'd them in the Bosom of the Divinity. And who could better reveal them to us than the Author and the God of them? who knew them more than he that did create them and possess them? Yea when this Son of God would be Incarnate and take Flesh, and was to carry it through all the Miseries that Sin deserv'd and God's Wrath could inflict, he thought these Joys encouragement enough to do it willingly, these Pleasures were worth Agonies which none but a God could suffer, *Heb. xii. 2.* Now sure he that prepar'd these Joys did understand them, and he that is the *Word of God* knew best how to reveal them too. And now how poor a wish was that of our Rich Man? Let *Lazarus* go tell them: why a *Person of the Trinity* hath told us; indeed how could God do more than come himself to reveal the truth of them, and himself die for them to reveal the greatness of them? Good God! that no body could serve thy

turn to tell us of the pleasures of thy Bosom but the Son of thy Bosom ! that thou shouldst think it worth an Incarnation to reveal them, and we not think it worth a little Reformation to have them; that he should part with Blood and give his Life for those Joys, and we not be content to forsake a Custom, to give away the pleasures of a Lust, the neither pleasures nor profits of an Oath, the sick delights of an Excess, nor the vexations of a Passion in exchange for them ! what will *Hell* say to us when one there said, if *Lazarus will go they will repent* ? If

Lazarus, Thirdly, one that saw me in *Hell*, and so can *testifie* the Torments of this place, yet God hath out-done this too. Our *Creed* will tell us who *descended into Hell*, and the *Psalmist* saying concerning him, *God should not leave his Soul in Hell*. *S. Austin* asks, *Quis ergo nisi infidelis negaverit fuisse Christum apud inferos* ? 'Twere easie for me to produce enough besides that say so. *Clem. Alex, Origen, Hier. Greg. Naz. Fulgent. Euseb. Emissenus. Casarius. Anastas. Jobius. Damascenus. Oecumenius, &c.* But because we are not agreed what he did there, I'll take a surer *medium*. That no *Lazarus* can decipher the condition of a Sinner after the pleasures of his iniquity have left him to the recompences of it, so well as *Christ* who not onely did *prepare* the Plagues, and therefore can describe them, but also himself *bore* the pains, and found a few hours bearing them to be too heavy for him, is most evident. His *Agonies* will give you a relation beyond the skill of *Lazarus* that saw the Torments, or of *all* that *suffer* them. Look but into the *Garden*, and see if you do not behold there a more dismal Landshape than that which *Lazarus* had beyond the Gulf, and was desir'd to give account of ? there you shall find *Christ* at the first approaches saying, *my Soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death*, Matth. xxvi. 38. As if the onely apprehension of his sufferings had inflicted them, and he could not live under the thoughts of them : and then *he went a little farther and fell upon his face and prays, saying, O my Father if it be possible let this Cup pass from me*. And what was there in this Cup which so empoysn'd it as to make it dreadful to the Son of God ? Oh 'tis the Sinners potion that he must swill to everlastingness, and when he was in this condition *there appeared an Angel from Heaven strengthning him*, Luke xxii. 43. yet v. the 44. we find him *still in an Agony*. Angels cannot comfort one that is sensible of the guilt of sin upon him ; and *he prays more earnestly in that same place, Abba Father all things are possible with thee, take away this Cup from me*. He does not leave an Attribute unattempted, he does adore the *Majesty*, for he falls upon his Face and Prays : A Person of the Trinity prostrated in the dust to deprecate those pains ; he wooes him to it, *Abba Father*, canst thou deny thy well-beloved, onely begotten Son, thy Son that is thy self, when he comes to thee with such tender compellations of kindness ? with words of so much bowels ? *Abba Father* : he takes hold too of his *Omnipotence*, *all things are possible with thee* ; and he does it with all the earnestness possible to such a Person : for saith *St. Luke* there, *he does it more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of Blood falling to the ground*, and what Agony is there in the Torment, when there is Agony in the deprecation of them ? such a Passion could not be prayed against with earnestness enough, but that that very earnestness will prove a Passion : Yea and he goes again the third time and prays the same words, as if, if nothing else, importunity should pre-

vail, and when we shall consider that the Person doing this is the Son of God, to whom nothing could be truly insupportable, yet that he should not be able to bear sin; the weight of that we see makes him cry out *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* as if God could forsake that Person in whom the Godhead was of his Person: Or indeed as if the condition did even separate between him and himself.

And now could any from the dead have given such a frightening account? is there not as much warning in this prospect; as if our selves had tasted all of it? for is it not more that these Torments should be so terrible to him than that they should be insupportable to us? Blessed Saviour! if the first apprehensions did assault thee with such killing fury, can we resolve to stand the storm? if we do not resolve that, then if all this will not scare us, but notwithstanding all these fears we will have our delightful, yea and our tormenting sins, what other method will be able to reclaim us? *they that hear not Moses and the Prophets, nor yet Christ, neither will they be perswaded sure though any other come unto them from the dead.* And so I fall on my last part in these words.

If they hear not Moses and the Prophets neither will they be perswaded though one rose from the dead. Here the expression should be first taken notice of: For that is chang'd, it should go regularly thus, as in the proposal, *Nay Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent,* so in his answer, *if they repent not for Moses and the Prophets, neither will they repent though one rose from the dead.* But here 'tis otherwise; as if to repent and be perswaded, yea and to hear *Moses and the Prophets* were the same things. And if it were our Age had got a fair pretence for bringing all Religion to the Ear; but sure Repentance costs the eyes and heart more than it does that part, and yet the Scripture useth oft the like expression: So in 1 Tim. iv. 16. it is said of Timothy, that *by continuing in his Doctrine he should save them that hear him.* So also 1 Cor. xv. 2. *by which ye are sav'd if ye keep in memory the things which I have Preach'd unto you.* 'Tis pity when the Ear and Memory are so priviledg'd, that the Tongue hath not the like advantage; but not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; yet to know hath as great, for *this is Life eternal to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,* John xvii. 3. Which Life Eternal, and the being sav'd, or justified, we may not think are so attributed to these, as if to hear, or to remember, or to be perswaded, that is to believe or know, any or all of these alone, shall be rewarded so; or that these necessarily do produce all the rest that is necessary to attain those ends: But onely that it is so reasonable that they should produce them, that the Scripture does presume they will; and therefore affirms, *He that says he knows God and keeps not his Commandments is a Liar.* 1 John ii. 4. and *he that sinneth hath not seen him neither known him,* 1 John iii. 6. Nor heard of him it seems by the Text here: For it is so irrational that they who have had notice of the advantages of serving God, and the sad issues of Iniquity, should not reform; that the Scripture does not suppose them guilty of it, but does chuse to word it thus, *they hear not:* A sharp rebuke for them all whose Religion is much hearing without doing; the men whose Soul dwells in their Ear, and that dwells by the Pulpit, that these should be adjudged as men that never heard; and so they shall in every respect indeed, but in the innocence of not having heard, that

that they do hear so much shall aggravate their Sentence: and yet their Crime is that *they hear not Moses and the Prophets*, and then *neither will they be perswaded though one rose from the dead*.

Where I note Secondly, that our Saviour does not intend here to commit *Prophecy* and *Miracles*, and set them one against the other, to shew which were most efficacious in begetting Faith: for Predictions being Gods exerting of his *Omniscience*, as *raising from dead* is the exerting of his *Omnipotence*, the one a miracle of *Knowledge*, as the other is of *Power*, *Prophecy* therefore is not to be oppos'd to *Miracle*, because it works meerly as one; indeed it is a miracle in *Expectation*, or at *distance*, and the other *present*: Nor are they to be made to vie, since both conspire, and both are best in different cases: Besides our Saviour is not talking here of *begetting Faith*, but *making men repent*, and the whole meaning of the words is briefly this. Thy Brethren being *Jews* have *Moses and the Prophets*, those contain all the *motives of Repentance*, Gods *Commands*, his *Promises*, and *Threats*; even *Heaven* and *Hell* as themselves confess, all these have been confirm'd already by great Miracles, and as such have been long since received by the whole *Jewish Church*, with so immovable an Opinion of the truth of them, that there needs no new Miracle to give accession of credit to them. And then what can one coming from the dead perswade? new motives he can bring them none; Man's nature is not capable of any other kinds, for he can act but from his *affections*, or his *Reason*; all which are baited to the height by those *motives* they have; the Understanding and the Appetite whether it *love*, or *hate*, or *hope*, or *fear*, (which set on work whatever we perform) all these I say *Heaven* and *Hell* are Object for even to the utmost possibility of motion; If he can bring no new ones, those they have when they are once truly believ'd then they have all the vigour they can have; *belief being the application of those active motives to their work*, but all the *strength* to act being in those *motives themselves*; all I mean in opposition to the *miracle*. I know that there are other strengths of *Grace*, but those do help as well the Miracle as Motive; those have influence on the believing too, by their *exciting* and *assisting*: (But this strength which may be common to both is not to be considered when one vies with the other:) What therefore shall he go for who can give no new motives nor strength to those they have? If any should not be confirm'd enough in that which *Moses and the Prophets say*, how shall they be convinc'd that this Ghost is of more credit than they were? but if he should be so far heeded, as to add new Confirmation to them, yet if improbity hath been able to dead the force of the activity of all that *Moses says*, although acknowledged, with that veneration which the *Jews receive Moses* with, *whose credit they themselves do say no Miracle can be wrought so great as to be able to add to, or diminish from*: why then that same improbity within a while will with more ease work off the force of this new Confirmation, so that it will be vain. Indeed 'tis possible that the surprize of such a Miracle just as any other sudden and amazing accident may make a man consider, what though he did afore believe, yet he did not *mind* nor *lay to heart*; yet when the astonishment of that is over, the motives then are left to their own strength, and can work onely by their own activity, which we see hath been able to do nothing; so that a Miracle at most can be but a *more awful remembrancer*.

Now sure to bring this to our selves, we want none such, nor do they prove much useful: Occasions of astonishment and such *fatal remembrancers* have come and taken up their habitation in our Land, and make approaches towards, hover over every place. *Long Bills of mortality*, and *sad knells*, and *dreadful passing bells*, these are all messengers from the dead, that come posting to us swift as *Gods Arrows*: And one would think we should take notice of their message, hear them when they pass so near us, when they seem to call out to our selves, *when a thousand do fall besides us, and ten thousand at our right hand*; wherefore should not an *Army of such Carcasses* become as moving as one *Ghost*? should *Lazarus* come forth with all his sores, they would not be so terrible as these *carbuncles* and *ulcers of the Plague*: And the *destroying Angel* out of *Heaven* with his *Sword* drawn, one would expect, should be as efficacious as a *Preacher out of Abrahams Bosom*. And yet men do not seem to hearken any more to these than they do to us, when we either *Preach*, or which they think much less, when we read *Scripture* to them, that is, when *they hear Moses and the Prophets*. Men have the same security as to their sins which they had in the freest times, whatever fears possess them, they are not the fears of God, *those that make men depart from evil*; none of those that fright into Repentance; we have no Religious cares upon us now more than at other times, but Vice as if that also had a Sanctuary under the *Lords wings*, and might retire under his feathers to be safe, dreads no *Terrors of the Night*, nor *Arrows of the Day*, but walks as open and as unconcern'd as ever. And now should we behold a mad man on his death-bed spending his onely one remaining minute in execrations; the paleness of a shroud upon his face, but *Bloud* and *crimson Sins* upon his tongue; the frost of the Grave over all his parts, but a lascivious heat in his discourse; in fine, one that had nothing left alive of him but his Iniquity; would not an horror seize you at that sight? and the same frost possess you but to hear him? and yet his madness is his excuse, and his disease his Innocence. Should we see one that had no other madness, no other sickness but his sin do thus, would it not be more horrid? and is it not the same to see a Nation as it were upon its Death-bed, visited with all the treasures of *Gods Plagues*, his tokens on it, and every place and man in fearful expectations, and yet no allay of Vice? Wickedness as outrageous as ever? while it is thus, with what face can we beg of God to keep from us this *Plague and grievous sickness*? when we do onely mean to make this use of such indulgence, to cherish another Plague in our own hearts? What can we say to prove it would not be a mercy to us to be suddenly cut off, even in the midst of our iniquity? when by our going on in sin in the midst of Destruction, we make appear if he should let us live, yet we would only live to finish our iniquities: And longer time would have no other use but to fill up a greater measure of sin. What answer do we make to all these Messengers of Death that come so thick about us? what do we that may justify Gods care in sending us so many warnings? But 'tis no Wonder if the onely neighbourhood of Death have not been able to prevail upon us; have you not seen one whom his own iniquity, or Gods immediate Hand, hath by a Sickness, or by some sad Accident cast to the very brink of Death, so as the Grave seemed to begin to take possession of him? and all his hopes sickned and di'd? so that recovery from that condition may be well, as 'tis in *Scripture* often called

led a Rising? have you not seen him in that state, when he supposed that sinning was now done with him, and the next thing was Judgment, when God's Tribunal seemed to be within his view, and Hell to gape for him as wide as the Grave, both opening to receive their parts of him at the same time, and himself ready to divide himself into those two sad Habitations? With what effectual Sermon will he then Preach to himself against his sins? and that you may be sure shall work upon him; he instantly resolves against his Vices, he will not carry them along with him out of this Life, but cast them off as too sad dangerous Company, nor yet if God shall lend him life will he retain them, but it shall be a New Life which he will lead: And yet when God hath rais'd him up, after a while he returns to his Vomit, his Sins recover with his Body; he owes his Innocence but to his Weakness, nor is it more long-liv'd; his holy purposes decay as his strength grows, and die as soon as settled health does come: And he who never would commit the Sin again when he was Dying, mends into it again: And then what hopes is there in this mistaken Method? when we see men come themselves from the Dead unto themselves, yet cannot make themselves Repent. But if we are not all concerned in this, take a more spreading and more visible experiment. If ever one came from the Dead, this Church and State came thence: And by as great a Miracle of Resurrection. But where is the Repentance such a Miracle may have flattered our Expectations with, as I am confident the resolutions of it did in that sad dying state? are not some men as violent in those wicked practices that merited our former Ruin? and others in those cursed Principles that did inflict it, as they ever were? 'tis said by many that *have evil will at Sion* (and it is our concern to take a care they speak not truth) that in the Church some that are risen up again have still the *silence of the Grave upon them*, and are as dumb, as if their mouth were yet full of their monument Earth: And yet as if it were not full of Earth, nor had been satisfied with it in the Sepulchre, they gape still like the Grave that never can be satisfied. And we see others who as if this Resurrection were but a start out of a sleep, or lucid interval of former madness, have their hands ready not onely to tear off the hair, the unessential accessory beauties of the Body of the Church and State, but to scratch the Face, pull out the Eyes, and tear open those Wounds which their last fit of Fury did inflict, so to let life out again. And as for the Community of the Nation, 'tis true we are as it were risen from the Grave, but have we not brought up with us the Plague sores? are not the Spots upon us still? the Venom, Ulcer, and infection about us? Yea more contracted Stench and Putrefaction? such as Death and the Grave do add? and coming from the dead we will not yet part with these, but dress our selves in those infected and defiled grave-cloaths, and *rise into corruption*, and so confute Gods Method of a Resurrection. 'Twere happier if we would so far confute the Text, that coming our selves from the dead, we would renounce communion with all Deaths adherencies; begin the *incorruptible*, which shall be consummated when we shall rise again a Church triumphant: when *Death shall be swallowed up in Victory*, and neither Sin nor Repentance shall be any more, but Holiness, and Life, and Glory too shall be Immortal and unchangeable.

To which, &c.

The

1. 1011
c. 10

The Twelfth
SERMON,
 Preached at
CHRIST-CHURCH
 IN
OXFORD,

Decemb. 31. 1665.

LUKE II. part of the 34. verse.

*Behold this Child is set for the Fall and Rising again
 of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be
 spoken against.*



AND Simeon Blessed them, and said, &c. A Benedi-
 ction sure of a most strange importance: If to
 bring forth one that is to be a large Destruction;
 if to be delivered of a Child that must be for the
Fall of many, and the killing of the Mothers self;
 be *blessed*; if Swords and Ruins be Comforts, then
 my Text is full of these: But if this be to *Bless*,
 what is it to *forespeak* and *abode ill*? Yet how-
 ever ominous and fatal the words are, they give us the *event* and the
design too of the Blessed Incarnation of the Son of God, the Child of
 this Text and of this Season: A short view of Gods *Counsel* in it; and
 the *Effects* of it. The *Effects* in these Particulars.

1. *This Child is for the Fall of many.*
2. *For the Rising again of many.*
3. *For a Sign: With the quality of that sign; he is for a sign that
 shall be spoken against.*
2. *The Counsel and Design of this is signified in the word here Keṁraj:
 he is set, and preordain'd to be all this:*

First

First of the first Effect, *This Child is for the Fall of many.*

And here I shall but onely name that way whereby many men set this Child for their own Fall, while they make his holy Time to be but a more solemn opportunity of sinning: We know many celebrate this great Festival with Surfeits and Excesses, the usual appendages of Feasting, Oaths and Curses the ingredients of Gaming; Dalliance and Lasciviousness the attendants of Sporting; of all which this seems as it were the Anniversary, a set time for their return. Thus indeed the Israelites did solemnize the Birth of their Idol-Calf, *They sat down to Eat and Drink, and rose up to Play.* And must we celebrate *this Child* too like that Calf, because he was born among Brutes? And must his Votaries also be of the Herd? And he live and be worship'd always in a Stable? Because God became Man, must Men therefore become Beasts? Is it fit to honour that Child with Iniquity and Loosness, that did come into the World upon designs of Holiness, to settle a most strict Religion? Nothing can be more incongruous than this; and certainly there is nothing of Gods Council in it. But to you whose time seems nothing else but a constant Festival, always hath the Leisure, and the Plenties, and the Sports of one, who as to these things keep a *Christmas* all your life, this Season as it does not seem to challenge those things to it self peculiarly, so I shall not now insist on them; but proceed to those ways by which *Simeon* did Prophecy, *This Child would be for the fall of many in Israel.* And they are three,

Verse 31, 32.

I. *This Child* whom I but now declar'd God had prepar'd to be the Glory of his People Israel, yet his Birth was so inglorious, and his Life answerable to it shall be so mean and poor, and his Death so full of shame and curse, that these shall prove a scandal to his People, who shall be offended at them; and being prepossess'd with prejudices of a Pompous Royal Messiah, they will not believe in this, but reject a Saviour that comes upon those disadvantages, which will therefore prove occasions of falling to them.

Rom. ix. 33.
1 Pet. ii. 6.
John ix. 29.
Mark vi. iii.
John vii. 48.

That it was so is expressly said, *Behold, I lay in Sion a Chief Corner-stone, a stone of stumbling, and a Rock of offence.* And that it was so upon this account is clear, the Great ones cry out of him, *This fellow we know not whence he is:* They that seem'd to know whence did upbraid him with it, *Is not this the Carpenter?* And therefore with a deal of scorn they question, *Do any of the Rulers or the Pharisees believe in him?* Yea Christ himself knew this would be so great a Scandal, that in the 11. Chapter of S. Matthew, in the close of many Miracles which he wrought on purpose to demonstrate he was the Messiah, he adds *vers. 6. and blessed is he that shall not be offended in me.* As if he thought his mean condition would prove a greater argument against him than his mighty Works were for him: And it were a vaster Prodigy to see the Saviour of the World, the promised Messiah, poor and abject; than to see one cure the Blind, and heal the Lame, and raise the Dead; and they might think they had a stranger Miracle to confirm their unbelief, than any he would work to make them believe in him.

And really, that the Kingdom of the Messiah, which the Prophets did express in terms as high as their own Extracies and Raptures, in transported words, as if it vied with Gods Dominion, both for extent and for duration, should prove at last an Empire onely over twelve poor Fishermen

and

and *Pullicans*, and one of them a *Traytor* too: And that *He* that was born this *King*, should be born in a *Stable*; while he liv'd that he should not have an *hole* to put his *Head* in, nor his *Corps* in when he died, but his *Grave* too must be *Charity*; this would startle any that did wait for the *Redemption* of *Israel* in those glorious expresses which the *Prophets* trac'd it out in. To you indeed that are *Votaries* to *this Child*, are confirmed *Christians*, these seeming disadvantages can give no prejudice: However mean and abject his condition were, that cannot make you to despise him, who from that must needs reflect how dear you were to God, when for your sakes merely he became so mean an abject. *He be-* ^{2 Cor. viii. 9.}
came poor, saith *S. Paul*, that you through his poverty might be made rich: He was made the *Child* of *Man*, that you might be made *Sons* of *God*; it was to pay the price of your *Redemption* that he so emptied himself; thus ^{ἑαυτὸν ἐκ-}
 he valued you; and men do not despise merely *because*, and by those mea- ^{φωσ.}
 sures that, they are esteem'd, these are not the returns of love; its passion- ^{Phil. ii. 7.}
 ate, obliging, ravishing effects do not use to be thus required; this his great descent cannot occasion your fall, who know he descended onely to assume you up to glory. But 'tis worth inquiry, why, since it was certain that for this *this Child* should be the *fall* of *Israel*, that for this they would reject him; and the meanness of his condition would prove an unremovable obstruction to their belief, as it is to this day; Why yet he would chuse to be born in a condition so in the utmost extream to his own nature, so all contradiction to his Divinity, and so seemingly opposite to the very end of his coming.

The *Jew* indeed will find no excuse for his Infidelity from this condition: For whatever that were, yet those *Miracles* that made the *Devils* to confess him, brought conviction enough to make *Jews* *inexcusable*. And it was obvious to observe, that *He* who fed five thousand with five Loaves and two, *Fishes*, till they left more than was set before them, needed not to be in a condition of want or meanness, if it were not otherwise more needful he should not abound. God, that when he brought this first begotten Son into the World, said, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*, ^{Matth. xiv. 19.}
 might have put him into an estate which all Mankind most readily would ^{20, 21.}
 have done homage to: As easily have dress'd his *Person* with a blaze of *Pomp* and *Splendor*, as his *Birthday* with a *Star*; if there had not been necessity it should be otherwise. And such there was. For when the ful- ^{Heb. i. 6.}
 ness both of *Time* and *Iniquity* was come, when *Vice* could grow no further, but did even cry for *Reformation*, and when the *Doctrine* that must come to give the *Rules* of this *Reformation*, was not onely to wage War with *Flesh* and *Blood*, with those desires which *Constitution* gives, but which perpetual universal *Custom* had confirmed; and which their *Gods* also, as well as *Inclinations* did contribute to; which their *Original sin*, and their *Religion* equally fomented; for *Vice* was then the *Worship* of the World, *Sins* had their *Temples*, *Theft* its *Deity*, and *Drunkenness* its *God*, *Adultery* had many, and to prostitute their bodies was most sacred, and their very *Altar-fires* did kindle these foul heats, whence *Unclean-ness* is so often call'd *Idolatry* in *Scripture*: And besides all this, when all the *Philosophy*, and all the power of the World were engag'd in the belief and practice of this, and resolv'd with all their wit and force to keep it so. When it was thus, the *Doctrine* that must come to oppose, controul, reform all this, must come either arm'd with *Fire* and *Sword*,
 X design

design to settle it self by *Conquest*, or come in a way of *Meekness* and of *suffering*: The first of these *Religion* cannot possibly design, because it cannot aim to settle that by *violence*, which cannot be *forc'd*; and where 'tis *force*, is not *Religion*. One may as well invade, and hope to get a *Conquest* over *thoughts*, and put a *Mind* in *Chains*, and *force* a man to *will* against his will. All such motives are incompetent to demonstrate *Doctrines*, for however successful their force proves, yet it cannot prove the *Doctrines* true; for by that *Argument* it proves that *Religion* that it settles true, it proves that which it destroys was true before, while it prevail'd and had the Power. Had this *Child* come so, he had onely given such a testimony to the truth of *Christianity*, as *Heathenism* had before, and *Turcism* hath since: He might indeed, have drown'd the wicked World again in another Deluge of their own Blood: But sure, never had reform'd it thus. Therefore that *Religion*, that must oppose the Customs and the Powers of the World, upon Principles of Reason and Religion, must do it by *Innocence* and *Patience*, by *doing good*, (and which was necessary, then by consequence as the World stood,) by *suffering evil*: parting with all, not onely the Advantages but the Necessaries of this life, and life it self too, where they stood in competition, and were inconsistent with mens duties, and their expectations: And by this means they must shew the World that their Religion did bring in a better hope than that, which all the profits, pleasures, glories of this World can entertain and flatter.

Heb. vii. 19.

Thus they did, and thus they did prevail. For the first Ages of the Church, were but so many Centuries of Men, that entertained Christianity with the Contempt of the World, and Life it self. They knew that to put themselves into *Christ's* Service and Religion, was the same thing as to set themselves aside for spoil and Rapine, dedicate themselves to Poverty and Scorn, to Racks, and Tortures, and to Butchery it self. Yet they enter'd into it; did not onely renounce the Poms and Vanities of the World in their Baptism, when they were new born to God; quench their affections to them in those waters; but renounc'd them even to the death; drown'd their affections to them in their own heart blood: ran from the World into flames, and fled faster from the satisfactions and delights of Earth, than those flames mounted to their own Element and Sphere: In fine, they became *Christians* so, as if they had been *Candidates of death*, and onely made themselves *Apprentises of Martyrdom*. Now if it were not possible it should be otherwise than thus, as the World stood, then it was necessary that the *Captain of Salvation* should lead on, go before this noble Army of *Martyrs*; if it were necessary that they must leave all who followed him; then it was not possible that he should be here in a state of Plenty, Splendor, and Magnificence; but of Poverty, and Meanness; giving an Example to his followers, whose condition could not but be such. To give which Example was, it seems, of more necessity, than by being born in Royal Purple, to prevent the fall of many in Israel, who for his condition despis'd him.

Heb. xi. 10.

I am not so vain as to hope to persuade any from this great Example here to be in love with Poverty, and with a low condition, by telling them this Birth hath consecrated meanness, that we must not scorn those things in which our God did chuse to be install'd; that *Humility* is, it seems, the proper dress for *Divinity* to shew it self in. But when we consider, if this Child had been born in a condition of Wealth and Greatness,

ness, the whole Nation of the *Jews* would have received him; whereas that he chose prov'd an occasion of *falling* to them: Yet that God should think it much more necessary to give us an Example of Humility and Poverty below expression; then it was necessary that that whole Nation should believe on him. When of all the Virgins of that People, which God had to chuse one out to *overshadow*, and impregnate with the *Son of God*, he chose one of the *meanest*, (for he hath regarded the low estate of *Luk i. 43.* his Handmaiden, said she,) and one of the poorest too, for she had not a Lamb to offer, but was *purified, in formâ pauperis*. When he would reveal this Birth also, that was to be the joy of the whole Earth, he did it to none of that Nation, but a few poor Shepherds, who were labouring with midnight-watches over their Flocks; none of all the great Ones, that were then at ease, and lay in softs, was thought worthy to have notice of it: Lastly, when the Angels make that poverty a sign to know the Saviour by. *Luk ii. 12.* This shall be a sign unto you, You shall find the Babe wrap'd in swadling cloaths, and laid in a Manger: As if the Manger were sufficient testimony to the Christ, and this great meanness were an evidence 'twas the Messiah: From all these together, we may easily discover what the temper is of Christianity. You see here the Institution of your Order: the First born of the Sons of God, born but to such an Estate. And what is so original to the Religion, what was born and bred with it, cannot easily be divided from it. *Generatio Christi generatio populi Christiani, natalis Capitis, natalis* *Luo. Corporis.* The Body and the Head have the same kind of Birth, and to that which Christ is born to, Christianity it self is born. Neither can it ever otherwise be entertain'd in the heart of any man, but with poverty of spirit, with neglect of all the scorns, and the Calamities, yea, and all the gaudy glories of this World, with that unconcernedness for it, that indifference and simple innocence that is in Children. He that receiveth not the Kingdom of Heaven as a little Child, cannot enter therein, saith Christ: *Matth. xviii. 3.* True indeed, when the Son of God must become a little Child, that he may open the Kingdom of Heaven to Believers. Would you see what Humility and lowliness becomes a Christian? see the God of Christians on his Royal Birth-day. A Person of the Trinity, that he may take upon him our Religion, takes upon him the form of a Servant; and He that was equal with God, must make himself of no Reputation, if he mean to settle *Phil. ii. 6, 7.* and be the Example of our Profession. And then, when will our high spirits, those that value an huff of Reputation more than their own Souls, and set it above God himself, when will these become Christian? Is there any more uncouth or detestable thing in the whole World, than to see the great Lord of Heaven become a little one, and Man that's less than nothing magnifie himself? to see Divinity empty it self, and him that is a Worm, swell and be puffed up? to see the Son of God descend from Heaven, and the Sons of Earth climbing on heaps of Wealth, which they pile up, as the old Gyants did Hills upon Hills, as if they would invade that throne which he came down from? and as if they also were set for the fall of many, throwing every body down that but stands near them, either in their way or prospect? Would you see how little value all those interests that recommend this World, are of to Christians? see the Founder of them chuse the opposite extream: Not onely to discover to us that these are no accessions to felicity, This Child was the Son of God without them: But to let us see that we must make the same choice too, when

Deut. xxviii.
1, 5.

Mar. x. 30.

Isai. xi. 10.

Matth. x. 25.
Matth. iii. 22.Psal. lxix.
10, 11, 12.

Luke xv. 19.

2 Pet. 3. 3.

Psal. i. 1.

ever any of those interests affront a Duty, or sollicit a good Conscience; whensoever indeed they are not reconcilable with *Innocence, Sincerity, and Ingenuity*. It was the want of this disposition and temper that did make the *Jews* reject our Saviour. They could not endure to think of a Religion that would not promise them to *fill their basket*, and to *set them high above all Nations of the Earth*, and whose appearance was not great and splendid, but look'd thin and maigre, and whose *Principles and Promises* shew'd like the *Curses* of their Law, *call'd for sufferings*, and did *promise persecution*; therefore they rejected him that brought it, and so *this Child was for the fall of many in Israel*.

2. *This Child is for the fall of many* by the *holiness* of his Religion: while the strictness of the Doctrine which he brings, by reason of mens great propensions to wickedness, and their inability to resolve against their Vices, will make them set themselves against it, both by word and Deed: For they will contradict and speak ill of, yea, they will openly renounce, and fall away from it and him.

1. For that reason they will *contradict, speak ill* of him and of his Doctrines: This is said expressly in the last words of my Text, *He is for a sign that shall be spoken against*; that is, *that very holiness both of his Life and Doctrine, that shall make him signal, it shall make him be derided and blasphemed*. As if his being a *Σημειον* for an *Ensign* lifted up, a *Standard* for all Nations, were not for them to *betake themselves to*, but to level all their batteries against. Accordingly we find they call'd him *Beelzebub*, because *he cast out Devils*. And all this was foretold: For although he were *fairer than the Children of men*, Psal. xlv. Yet Isai. liii. It is said, *He hath no form nor comeliness, when we shall see him, there is no beauty in him, that we should desire him, he is despised and rejected of men*. Surely because his *holiness* did cloud and darken all his Graces. Devotion in a Countenance does writh and discompose it, prints Deformity upon it; and Eyes lifted up with ardency, look as bad as eyes distorted, set awry. Nay *Majesty* when it was most severe and pious, never yet could guard Religion from these *scorns*. *David*, that great and holy King, says of himself, *I wept and chastened my self with fasting, and that was turn'd to my reproof*; as if Repentance were among his Crimes, and he must be Corrected for his Discipline. *I put on Sackcloth also, and they jested upon me, they that sate in the gate spake against me, and the Drunkards made songs upon me*. Sure these jolly men are not companions to those Angels, *in whose presence there is joy over one sinner that repenteth*; that his Vertue should be a *rejoycing*, and a *song* to them too: Certainly the penitent mans tears do not fill their Cheartful bowls, nor his groans make those *Airs* which they set their drunken Catches to. But that we may be sure it never will be otherwise, *S. Peter* tells us, *That in the last days there shall come scoffers, walking after their own lusts*. Now the men of our days have the luck to obey Scripture thus far as to make that Prophecy to come to pass; for those *scoffers* are come in *power and great glory*. The Psalmist tells us of a *Chair of Scorners*, as if these were the onely men that speak *ex cathedra*: And sure *scoffs* and *taunts* at Religion are the onely things that may be talk'd with *confidence, aloud*: They imprint an Authority on what is said, and conversations that are most insipid on all other scores, get account as they come up towards this practice: Hence they *gain degrees*; *commence ingenious* as they border on

on these Atheistical and irreligious Blasphemies; and when it is pure scorn, then it is in the Chair.

But it stays not there; For Secondly, Upon the same account of strictness of Religion, men will fall off from, and openly renounce both Christ and his Religion. This is that our Saviour himself found, *Light*, saith he, *is come into the World, and men loved Darknes rather than the Light*, John iii. 19. *because their deeds were evil.* And he said of the Pharisees, *They repented not that they might believe*, as knowing it impossible that they could venture to believe that Doctrine which condemn'd those courses that they would not repent of. Matth. xxi. 34

And if I should affirm, that it is nothing else but mens unwillingness to be obliged to those things, which if there be a *God*, and a *Religion* which this *Child* was set to institute, they must account themselves obliged to; nothing else I say but this, which makes them so *unwilling to believe a God or Christ*; yea, openly renounce them both, and their Religion; I should have for proof of this, not onely the late instance of a Nation in the *Indies*; which, by institution of the *Portugals*, was easily persuaded to embrace the Christian Creed, and was Baptized into our Faith; but when they were required to lead their lives according to Christs Precepts, and renounce their *Heathen Licences*, they chose rather to renounce their *Creed* and *Saviour*, and returned instantly to their indulgent *Heathenism*. But to this experience, give me leave to add this Reason, that it is not the Difficulty of the *Mysteries of Faith*, and their being above our Comprehension, which makes them not to be receiv'd; because there are as great difficulties in things that we are certain of. For in the very *Sphere of Reason*, within the lines and measures of their own *Infallibility*, in things of which she does assure her self by *Diagrams* and *sense*, yet she is as much amaz'd, as at those Objects in the highest and remotest Regions of *Faith*; and *Mathematicks* hath her *Paradoxes* that stand in as great danger of a contradiction as any of *Religions* Mysteries; while Reason cannot cape what she demonstrates, but is to seek how those things can be possible which she proves most certain; and they are *incomprehensible* to her, even when they are most evident: And then sure if we can think there is a *God*, we must needs think *He can* do things which we cannot comprehend; when it is plain our Reason cannot comprehend what she her self does find out and create. It is not therefore contradiction to *Reason*, but to *Appetite*, that makes things of Religion so *incredible*; which I thus demonstrate to the *Atheist*. Myster. (ut videtur
cari solet)
Asymp. toticum
& Angul. con-
tingent. &c.

Those very difficulties, to avoid which he *denies a God*; to wit, *Those of an Eternal Being that is of himself*; those very things he *must* and *does* acknowledg in the being of the *World*, if that either be it *self* Eternal (as the *Atheist* of the *Peripatetick* Tribe will have it) or else if its *atomes*, out of which it was concreated, were: (as those of *Epicurus* herd assert.) In a word, if they say the *World* or its *materials* were made, they grant a *God* that made it; If they say they were *not made*, they assert then an *Eternal Being* of it *self*; that is, they allow those difficulties for which they pretend to *deny a God*.

There being therefore the same difficulties, (Greater I could prove them, from the diverse natures of corporeal and spiritual beings; for we are sure, in *bodies* that are still in *motion*, and so subject to *succession*, those things are impossible; but if there be a *Being* that is *not in motion*; and

by

by consequence, not subject to the *laws of our time*, all these knots unty themselves, those difficulties vanish and have no place: But to say no more than I have shewed; *there being the same Difficulties in the Atheist's Hypothesis as in the other*, 'tis apparent, not the *difficulties of belief*, but *practice*, make him fix upon his own against the *common notions* of the World. So that 'tis not his *understanding*, but his *Appetite* frames his *hypothesis*; and without figure, 'tis his *Will* that he believes with. And it is most evident, that because men do not love the *Precepts* of Religion, would not have them be their *duty*, therefore they would have the *Doctrines* of it not be *truths*; and in this they are the *Disciples* *onely* of their *Lusts*, and because they cannot resolve to be otherwise, therefore they resolve not to be *Christ's Disciples*, but reject him for his *holy Doctrines* sake: And so *this Child is for the fall of many*.

But it were strange if upon this account, Christ should be for the fall of any of us; who have learn'd a trick to reconcile his *severe Doctrines* and our *Sins* together. Where Vice most abounds, though it be wilful, and men persevere in it, they are so far from finding any reason to *fall off from him*, or from his *Gospel* for this, that they therefore take the *fast hold of it*, rely upon Him with the *bolder, stronger confidence*. As if good old Simeon were mistaken, when he thought, because men would not leave those sins which Christ so threatned, therefore they would leave him: Because they could not bear those his hard sayings, to *pull out the lust* and the *Eye too*; *cast away the treasures of unrighteousness*, and the *right hand* that receives them also; therefore they would cast off him: For, for this reason they betake themselves to him more eagerly, devolve and cast themselves upon him with assurance. 'Tis possible indeed that the new Christian'd *Indians* might believe themselves oblig'd to lead their lives according to the Vow that they had made in Baptism, knew not how to live a contradiction, to be *Christian Pagans*; therefore they thought it *absolutely necessary* to renounce the one; and to reject *Christ and his strict Religion* was *easier* they thought. Our Saviour also might suppose, that when he brought *Light* into the World, men would not receive that *Light*, because their deeds were evil: But our modern wickednesses that are of the true *Eagle kind*, are educated, bred up to *endure*, and to *desire* the *Light*: Our deeds of *Night* have learn'd to face both *Sun* and *Men*, yea and face the *Sun of Righteousness*, and the *light* of those *flames* that are to receive them. Our Saviour told the *Pharisees* indeed, that they repented not, that they might believe; for thinking it impossible they could assent to what he did affirm, except they would consent to what he did Command, He therefore thought they were not able to believe, because they would not purpose to amend. But there is nothing difficult in this to us, who at the same time, are so perfectly resolv'd that every threat of Gospel is so *Divine truth*, as that we assure our selves, that we could be content to *die Martyrs* to the truth of them, rather than renounce one tittle of them; yet even then are *Martyrs* to those *Lusts* and *Passions* which those Threats belong to: Who, at once, believe this Book of God, that says, *except ye repent ye shall all perish*; and believe also, that notwithstanding we do not Repent, yet by *Believing* we shall *scape*; not perish, but be saved. And is not this directly to believe our selves into *Damnation*? the *third* and the *great fall*, which *this Child is set for*.

Luke xiii. 3.

3. *This Child is for the fall of many*, to wit, of all those who on these, or any other grounds do not believe in, or do not obey him; who shall not obey him: who shall therefore fall into Eternal Ruin.

This our Saviour does affirm, S. John iii. 19. *This is the Condemnation that Light came into the World, &c.* This does aggravate the guilt, and Sentence. We were fal'n before indeed in Adam: And I dare not undertake to be so learned to say whether; to determine with some men that was but a fall from Paradise into the Grave, and we were forfeit to Death onely: But I may adventure to affirm, that in the second Adam, Sinners finally impenitent shall fall much farther than we did in the first Adam: Now their pit shall have no bottom, but this light that came to lighten them, shall be to them consuming fire and everlasting burnings. And all reason in the world. For, upon that fall of ours in Adam, help was offer'd us: an easie way not onely to repair those ruines, but to better infinitely that estate which we were fal'n from; and a way that cost God dear to purchase; cost him, not this Incarnation onely, but the Death and Passion of his Son, and divers other blessed methods of Salvation: Now if we refuse the mercy of all this, and scorn these miracles of condescending goodness, and despise those methods, that he makes use of to raise us from our Fall, it is apparent we provoke and choose deeper ruine; this refusal hath in it such desperate malignity, as to poison this great mercy of the Incarnation, and all the rest. 'Tis but a small thing to say, that they who Stumble at this Rock of their Salvation, spurning at it by their wilful disobedience, that these make an infinite mass of loving-kindness to be lost upon them, so as that Salvation cannot save them; for alas Salvation ruines them the deeper, and this Child is for their fall. The condition they were forfeit to before by reason of their breach of the first Covenant was advantage, comfortable in comparison of that which Christ does put them in: *This is the Condemnation*, that he came into the World; And it had been infinitely better for them, that this Child too had never been born. The unreformed have the least reason in the world to solemnize this Festival; they do but celebrate the birth of their own Ruin: bow down, and do reverence to their Fall: Had it not been for this, they had not gone to so severe an Hell. So that they do but entertain the great occasion of their greater Condemnation. Such it proves to them, and that it might be so, *He was fore-ordained for it: Κεῖται, This Child is set for the fall of many*, which does lead me to Gods Counsel in all this: My next Part.

This Child is set for the fall of many, even by Gods direct appointment; for saith Grotius, *Accedo iis qui putant non nudum eventum sed & consilium Dei significari.* I am of their opinion, who understand not the success alone, but the design of this Childs coming, and Gods Counsel in it is intended here. And without disputing of Gods antecedent Will, and consequent, this is safely said: God design'd this Child should be such an one, that they who had no inclinations for Virtue, would not entertain the love of it, but counted it a mean pedantick thing, and all its Rules and Laws unreasonable servitude, these loose men would certainly reject Him and his Doctrines, which were so severe and strict, That those who did pretend friendship for Vertue, and a service for Religion, but withal must be allowed to maintain correspondence with the World, seek the Honours and advantages of Earth, and will trespass on Religion where it inter-
feres

feres with these, break with Virtue when their interests cannot consist with it, that these false hypocritical pretenders, should be offended with the mean condition of this Child, and of his followers in this World, and with the poor spirited Principles of his Religion. In sum, they that upon these, or any other grounds finally disbelieve, or disobey him, God design'd this Child to be a means of bringing sorer Punishments, even to everlasting ruin upon such.

A black Decree this, one would think. He that had so much kindness for Mankind, to give away the only Son both of his Nature, his Affections, and his Bosom to them; could he then design that Gift to be the Ruin of the greatest part of men? This Child, Simeon said but just before my Text, is Gods Salvation, which he had prepared before all people; and does he now say God hath set him for their fall? The Angels preached this was a Birth that brought glad tidings of great joy that should be to all people; and is there so much comfort in destruction, that most men should rejoyce at that which is ordained to be the great occasion of it to them?

1 Pet. ii. 8.

But we have no reason to complain: 'Tis not unkind to deny Mercy to them that refuse the offers of it; that will not accept Salvation, when their God himself does come to bring it to them: tenders it upon condition of accepting and amending: Which if they despise, and prefer Hell before Repentance, chuse sin rather than Gods blessed retributions, 'tis but reason to deny them what they will not have, and let them take their chosen Ruine; to will their Judgment which they will themselves; set and ordain Him to be that to them, which themselves do ordain, and make him to be to themselves. So S. Peter says expressly: *He is a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offence to them who being disobedient stumble at the Word, whereunto they were appointed.* Disobedience, where it is obdurate, alters so the temper of our God, that it makes Him who swears he would not have the Sinner die, yet set out his Son to make such sinners fall into eternal Death. Makes Judgment triumph over Mercy, even in the great contrivances and executions of that Mercy; and while God was plotting an Incarnation for the everlasting Safety of Mankind, prevails with him to decree Ruins by the means of that Salvation; to Decree even in the midst of all those strivings of his Mercies, that that Issue of his kindness should be for the fall of such as they. Oh! let us consider, whether they are likely to escape that which is set and ordain'd for them by God? Whether they can hope for a Redemption, when the only great Redeemer is appointed for the Instrument of their Destruction; and God is so bent on their ruine, that to purchase it he gives this Child his Son. Yea, when he did look down upon this Son in Agonies, and on the Cross, in the midst of that sad prospect, yet the Ruine of such sinners, which he there beheld in his Sons Blood, was a delight to him, that also was a Sacrifice, and a sacrifice of a sweet smell to him. For S. Paul says, *We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that perish, because we are the savour of Death unto death to them:* As if their Brimstone did ascend like Incense, shed a perfume up to God, and their everlasting burnings were his Altar-fires, kindled his holocausts; and he may well be pleased with it, for he ordain'd it.

2 Cor. ii. 15.

'Tis true indeed, This Child riding as in Triumph, in the midst of his Hosannas, when he saw one City whose fall he was set for on this very account;

account; He was so far from being pleas'd with it, that he *wept over it* in pity. But alas, that onely more declares the most *deplored* and *desperate* condition of such sinners. *Blessed Saviour!* hadst thou no *Blood* to shed for them? *nothing* but *Tears*? or didst thou weep to think thy very *Bloodshed* does but make their *guilt* more *crimson*, who refuse the mercy of that *Bloodshed* all the time that is offered? Sad is their state that can find no *pity* in the *Tears of God*, and remediless their Condition for whom all that the *Son of God* could do, was to *weep over them*, all that he did do for them, was to *be for their fall*; too sad a part indeed for *Festival Solemnity*, very improper for a *Benedictus* and *Magnificat*. To celebrate the greatest act of kindness the *Almighty* could design onely by the *miseries* it did occasion: to magnifie the vast descent of God from *Heaven* down to *Earth*, onely by reason of the *fall* of Man into the *lowest Hell* of which that was the cause. My Text hath better things in view: The greatness of that *fall* does but add height to that *Resurrection* which He also is the cause of: For, *Behold this Child is set for the rising again of many*: My remaining Part.

Rising again, does not particularly and onely refer to the foregoing *fall* here in the Text, which *this Child* did occasion, as I shewed you; but to the state wherein all Mankind, both in its *nature* and its *Customs*, lay ingull'd, the state of *Ignorance* and *sin*: A state from which recovery is properly *ἀνάστασις*, a *resurrection* and a *reviving* in this Life, and so call'd in Scripture often; as *Ephes. v. 15. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest & ἀνάστα ἐκ νεκρῶν and arise from the dead.* And *Rom. vi. 13. Yield not your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield your selves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead.* Now to raise us from the death of sin into the life of Righteousness, by the amendment of our own lives, to recover us into a state of Vertue, is the thing *this Child* is said here to be set for. This was that which God thought worth an *Incarnation*: Neither was there any greater thing in the prospect of his *everlasting Counsel*, when he did decree his Son into the World, than that *Κεῖται εἰς ἀνάστασιν*, He is set for this. The Word was made *Flesh*; to teach, practise, and persuade to Vertue: To make men *Reform* their lives, was valued at the price of a *Person of the Trinity*. Piety and his *Exinanition*, yea his *Blood and Life*, were set at the same rates; All of him given for our recovery.

The time would fail me if I should attempt onely to name the various methods he makes use of to effect this. How *this Child* that was the *brightness of his Fathers Glory*, came to lighten us; shining in his *Doctrine* and *Example*: How he sent more light, The *fiery Tongues*, *Illu-* Heb. i. 3; minations of the *Holy Ghost* to guide us in the ways of *Piety*: How he suffered *Agonies* and *Death* for sin to appale and fright us from it. How he *Rose again* to confirm *Judgment* to us, to demonstrate the rewards of *Immortality* to them that will repent and leave their sins, and *everlasting Torments* to those that refuse this Grace; Grace purchased with the *Blood of God*, to enable them to repent and leave. Besides all these, the *Arts* and *Messenger* of his Providence, in preventing and following us by *Mercies* and by *Judgments*, importuning us, and *timing* all his blessed Methods of *Salvation* to our most advantage. Arts, God knows, too many, if they serve us onely to *resist*, and turn to *wantonness* and *aggravation*; if we make no other use of Grace but this, to *sin against*, and overcome all Grace,

and make it *bolster Vice*; by teaching it to be an encouragement to go on in it, from some hopes we entertain by reason of *this Child*, instead of doing that which he was *set, Decreed* to make us do.

And really I would be glad to see this *everlasting Counsel* of the Lord had had some good effects, some, though never so little, happy execution of this *great Decree*, and that that which God *ordain'd from all Eternity*, upon such glorious and magnificent terms, were come to pass in any kind. Now, certainly there are no evident signs of any great *recovery this Child* hath wrought among us, in the World that's now call'd *Christian*. After those Omnipotent inforcives to a vertuous life, which he did work out, if we take a prospect of both Worlds, it would be hard to know which were the *Heathen*; and there would appear scarce any other notice of a *Christ* among us, but that we *blaspheme* Him or *deride* Him. Sure I am, there are no Footsteps of him in the lives of the community of Men: And I am certain that you cannot shew me any *Heathen* Age outgoing ours, either in *looseness* and *foul Effeminacies*, or in *sordidness* and *base injustice*, or in *frauds* and *falseness*, or *malignity*, *hypocrisy*, or *treachery*, or to name no more, even in the *lowest, most ignoble, disingenuous* sorts of *Vice*. In fine, men are now as *Earthly, Sensual*, yea and *Devilish*, as when *Sins* and *Devils* were their *Gods*.

Yea, I must needs say, that those times of *dark* and *Heathen* Ignorance, were in many men times of *shining* Vertue; and the little spark of *Light* within them, brake out through all obstructions into a *glory of Goodness*, to the wonder and confusion of most Christians: 'Tis true, we are pretty well reveng'd on them for setting us *Examples* so reproachful to us; calling their Heroick Actions, *splendida peccata*, onely *beauteous sins*, and *well-fac'd wickednesses*; and we have a reason for it; because they never heard of *Christ*, whose *Name* and *Merit* 'tis most certain, is the onely thing that can give *value* and *acceptance* to mens best performances: While on the other side, we *Christians* comfort and secure our selves in our transgressions from *this Child*, and from his *Name*. But if *this Child* were *set* to raise us up from *sin*, and to establish *stronger arguments* for a *good life* than the *Heathen* ever heard of, more especial *Divine engagements* to Vertue; then if their Vertues were, because they never heard of these engagements to them, *sins*; what censure will be past upon their Actions that *know* all those engagements and *despise* them? a sharper certainly unless to *desire knowledge*, and *provoke* against all Divine Obligations, all that God could lay, shall prove more tolerable than to labour to obey *without them*, *without knowing why*. 'Tis true, they had not heard it may be of that *Name*, than which there is *no other Name under Heaven given unto men whereby they may be saved*. Yet they endeavoured in some measure to do that, which He that owns that *Name*, and wrought the Covenant of those Salvations, does require. We know that *Name*, and have it call'd upon us, and know too, that *he that names that Name*, (that calls himself a *Christian*, owns the being a retainer to the *Holy Jesus*) *must depart from iniquity*, otherwise it is no *Name* of Salvation to him, yet we never mind the doing that; and then which hath the better Plea? the *Heathen's* sure were better, though he were *not vertuous*.

Acts iv. 12.

2 Tim. II. 19.

And

And if so, give me leave to tell you, how not onely *this Child*, but this *Resurrection* too is for our fall.

In the first Chapter to the *Romans* we shall find, those *Heathens*, when they did neglect to follow the direction of that Light within them, by which they were able to discover in some measure *the in-* Verse 20.
visible things of God; when they did no longer care to retain *God in* Verse 28.
their knowledg; then they quickly left off to be Men: And when they ceas'd to hearken to their Reason, they soon fell into a *reprobate sense*. What was it else to change *God* into *stocks and stones*? and *Worship* into most *abominable wickedness*? to make the *Vilest creatures Dei-* Ibid.
ties? and the foulest *Actions Religion*? to turn a *disease* into a *God*, and a *sin* into *Devotion*? a stupidity, which nothing else but *Gods* desertion and reasons too, could have betrayed them to, and made them guilty of.

And then, if by how much greater Light and means we have resisted, we shall be proportionably *more vile* in the consequents of doing so; keep at equal rates of distance from those *Heathens*, that the aggravations of our guilt stand at from theirs; Whether, *alas!* are we like to fall?

'Tis an amazing reflection, one would tremble to consider, how the *Christian World* does seem to hasten into that condition which *S. Paul* does there decipher: You would think that Chapter were our Character: But that we have reason to expect we shall fall *lower*, into much more *vile affections* than those *Heathens* did, as having fall'n down from a greater height than they.

Consider whether men do not declare *they like not to retain God in their thoughts*, when they endeavour to *dispute* and to *deride* him too out of the World! 'Tis true, they have not set up any *sins* or *monsters* in their *Temples* yet, as they did: But if they can empty them of *God* and *Christ*, and their *Religion*, and make room, we may imagine easily whose *Votaries* they will be, that live as if they thought themselves unhappy that they had not liv'd in those *good Pagan days*, when they might have *sinned with devotion*, been most wickedly *Religious*, and most *God-like* in *unchastities* and other *Villanies*; I dare say none of our *fine Gentlemen*, or our *great Wits*, would have been *Atheists* or *irreligious* then.

Think whether those are not already in that *reprobate sense* *S. Paul* does speak of, who have cast off all *discriminating notions* of good or evil, who say in their hearts, and affirm openly, there are none such in *truth* and *nature*: It would appear they were if we should try by those effects, *verse* 29, 30, 31. or by that essential signature, *vers. 32.* they not onely *commit such things*, but have *pleasure in them that do them*; which because they cannot have from those *Commissions* when they do not commit them, therefore their *debauched minds* must be satisfied there is no evil in those doings, and must reap the pleasure onely of such satisfactions: That is, have the satisfactions and pleasures onely of a *Reprobate sense*. In fine, (because I dare not prosecute the Character) Men sink so fast, as if they were resolv'd to fall as far below *Humanity*, as *this Child* did below his *Divinity*.

O do not you thus *break Decrees*, *frustrate* and *overthrow* the *everlasting Counsel* of *Gods Will* for good to you. He *set, ordain'd this Child*
Y 2 for

John xi. 25:
Phil. iii. 21.

for your *rising again*: Do not throw your selves down into Ruin in despite of his *Predestinations*. He hath *carried up* your nature into Heaven, plac'd *Flesh* in an union with *Divinity*, set it there at the *Right hand of God in Glory*: Do not you *debase* and *drag* it down again to Earth and Hell by *Worldliness* and *Carnal sensuality*. Make appear this *Child* hath *rais'd* you up, already made a *Resurrection* of your *Souls* and your *affections*; they converse, and trade in Heaven: And that you do not degenerate from that nature of yours that is there. Then *this Child* who is Himself the *Resurrection and the Life*, will raise up your Bodies too, and make them *like his glorious Body*, by the working of his mighty Power, by which he is able to subdue all things to himself. To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost be all Blessing, Power and Praise, Dominion and Glory for evermore.

The Thirteenth
SERMON,
 Preached at
WHITE-HALL.
Novemb. 17. 1667.

St. JAMES IV. 7.

Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.



These Words are easily resolved into two parts: The *first*, a Duty; and the *second*, to encourage the performance, an assurance of an happy issue in the doing it.

The First, the Duty in these words, *Resist the Devil*; the happy issue in those other, *he will flee from you.*

For the more practical and useful handling of these parts, I shall endeavour to do these three things.

1. View the Enemy we are to resist, *the Devil*; see his Strengths, and what are his chief Engines, his main Instruments of Battery, whereby he shakes, and does endeavour to demolish the whole frame of Vertue in mens lives, shatters and throws down all Religious, holy Resolutions, and subjects men to himself and Sin.

2. See what we are to do in opposition to all this; and how and by what means we must *resist*.

3. Prove to them that do *resist*, the happy issue which the Text here promiseth.

First of the first.

Though no man can be *tempted* (so as to be foil'd by the temptation) but *he that is drawn away by his own Lust, and enticed*, James i. 14. and all the blandishments of this World, all the wiles and artifices of the *Prince and God* of it, the *Devil*, are not able to betray one into sin, till his *own Lust conceive that sin, and bring it forth*; Man must be taken first in his *own Nets, and fall into that pit himself hath digged*, before he can be-
 Verse 15.
 come

come the Devil's prey: Yet Satan hath so great an hand in this affair, that *the Tempter* is his Name and Office, *Matth. iv. 3.* And the War
 Ephes. iv. 12. which is now before us is so purely his, that we are said to fight, *not against flesh and blood* (those nests and fortresses of our own Lusts) *but against Principalities and Powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this World, against spiritual wickednesses in high places;* that is, against the Enemy here in the Text, the Devil.

Now to bring about his ends upon us he hath several means. The first that I shall name is

Infidelity. With this he began in Paradise, and succeeded by it: for
 Gen. iii. 4. 6. he had no sooner told the Woman that she should *not surely die*, and so made her *doubt of*, *not believe*, and consequently *not fear*, that which God had threatned, but *she took of the forbidden fruit, and she did eat, and gave it to her Husband too, and he did eat.* Now if a Serpent siding with her inclination could so quickly stagger and quite overthrow her Faith; if she, because she *sees and likes* a pleasing Object, can, in meer defiance of her own assured Conviction, when the *Revelation* look'd her in the face, and God himself was scarce gone out of sight, straight give credit to a *Snake*, that comes and confidently gives the lye to God her *Maker*, offers her no proof at all of what he says, but onely flatters her desires with promises and expectations of she knows not what *Te shall not die; but ye shall be as Gods;* if in spite of Knowledge she turn Infidel so soon and easily: 'Tis no great wonder if that Serpent do, at this distance from Revelation, prevail on men, whose conversation being most with Sense (their satisfactions also consequently gratifying of their Sense) they do not willingly assent to any thing but that which brings immediate evidence and attestation of the Senses, which the Objects of our Faith do not (especially if it give check to and restrain those satisfactions, as those do) on such men, I say, that do not care, nor use, in things that are against their mind, to apply the Understanding close and strongly to reflect on those considerations which should move assent, and work belief. Considerations which I dare affirm, if with sincerity adverted to (if there be no improbity within to trash their efficacy, no sensual inclination cherish'd that must hinder their admittance, as not being able to endure to lodg in the same breast with those persuasions) would make disbelief appear not onely most *imprudent*, but a thing next to impossible. But in those that give themselves no leisure, have no will thus to advert, 'tis not strange if, *through Satans arts*, in things of this remote kind they have onely *languid opinions*, which sink quickly into doubts, and by degrees into flat *Infidelity*.

S. Paul does fetch the rise of unbelief of Christianity from hence, *2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; In whom the God of this World hath blinded their minds:* That is, if the Christian Doctrine do not appear to be the truth of God to any, 'tis to obstinate persons onely, whom the Devil hath besotted so with the advantages and pleasures of this World, that their affections to these will not let the other be admitted. For,

That Carnal prejudice can cast a mist before the mind, or that a bright and glittering Temptation of this World may dazle it so as that it cannot see that which is most illustriously visible, we have this demonstration.

Those

Those Works which Christ and his Apostles wrought, which made the whole World that was *Heathen* then, so many Millions of such distant Nations as could never meet together to conspire an universal change in their Religions, made them yet agree to lay aside their *dear gods* and their dearer Vices, and do that to embrace a *Crucified Deity*, a God put to a vile ignominious death, as one *worse* than the *worst of men*; and a Religion that was as much *hated*, counted as *accursed* as that God of it, *He* and his *Doctrine* crucified alike; and a Religion too that had as great severities in its Commands as in its Persecutions, that did it self enjoyn as hard and cruel things to flesh and blood as they that hated it inflicted, the *duties* and the *punishments* equally seem executed on its followers; and a Religion whose performances had no retributions here but fatal ones, no otherwise rewarded but with *fire* and *faggot*, and whose after-promises were most incredible: Those *Works* that could produce all this, had certainly *Omnipotent conviction* in them; sure we are there must be prodigy of *Miracle* either in the *causes*, or in the *effect*. And yet the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* are not wrought on by them. Their carnal Prejudices would not be removed, not by the *Finger of God*: The mean and despicable, and, as to all their worldly expectations and affections, the unsatisfying condition of our *Saviour*, had so clouded all his Works, and their own pride so blinded them, that they could see no *argument* in *Miracle*.

Now 'tis the Devil, that *God of the World*, that hath the power of its Glories, and the managery of its temptations, who, by raising these affections, dazles so and blinds the minds of men, that they should not believe. *S. Paul* affirms it: And 'tis plain that *unbelief* is no one's Interest but Satan's. For it is not Man's. Not the vertuous man's certainly: He's concern'd as much as Happiness amounts to, to believe there is a *God*, whose *cares* and *Providence* watch over him, whose Ears and Arms are open to him, whose *Bowels* yearn for him, whose *Blood* did purchase him, whose everlasting Blessednesses do await him. 'Tis his Interest to trust that *Vertue*, which the World so scorns or pities, was yet worthy God should be *Incarnated* to teach it, *die* to purifie us into it, and will raise us up again to crown it. Neither is this Unbelief *Man's real Interest*, abstracting from these prejudices of Religion. For if it were *Man's real Interest*, then it were every man's wisest course to pursue that Interest. But if every man did so, and should persuade himself into *Infidelity*, and that Religion and a Deity were but *dreams* or artifices, and so arrive so far as to have *no fear of God*, nor *sense of Honesty* or *Vertue*, the whole World must needs return into the first confusions of its *Chaos*: *Villany* and *Rapine* would have right. When those Mounds are thrown down, there is nothing that can hinder but that every man may lawfully break in upon and invade every thing. There is no fence to guard thy Coffers nor thy Bed, no nor thy very Breast: Rather indeed there can be nothing thine. This is, 'tis true, *Leviathan's state of Nature*; and 'tis so indeed with the *Leviathans* of Sea and Land, the wild Beasts of the Deep and of the Desert. But to prevent the necessary and essential mischiefs of this state amongst us Men, he will have Nature to have taught us to make *Pacts* and *Oaths*: But if there's no such thing as *Vertue* or *Religion*, then there is no Obligation to keep Pacts or Oaths. And why should he observe them that can safely break them? Here it is indeed that *Doctrine* ends;

to this their *Infidelity* does tend. And therefore 'tis no Interest of *States* or *Princes*. This the *Atheist* will confess; *Gods* and *Religions*, he says, were invented for the meer *necessities* of Governours, who could not be secure without those higher Obligations, and these after-fears. And are they not *kind Subjects* then who, by promoting *Atheism*, labour to break down that fence which themselves account *necessary*? Or are they not good rational Discourfers too, who labour to throw out a thing as *false* and *vain*, because 'tis *necessary*? So necessary sure, that they who weaken these bonds of *Religion*, quite dissolve those of *Allegiance*, all whose *Sinews* are made of those Sacred Ties, which if you untwist, the other Cords are burst as easily as *threads of Cobweb*. Nay these Doctrines lay Principles that justify *Rebellion* and *King-killing*. Nor if there's no such thing as *Vertue* or *Religion*, then those are no Crimes. And it is no wonder *Treason* hath been loved, when *Blasphemy* hath been so. They that hear men droll on *God Almighty*, raille their *Maker*, and buffoon with *Him*, will quickly learn to speak with little reverence of their *Superiours*. There's no Kingdom but the *Devil's* that can have support from *Infidelity*; 'tis the Interest of that indeed. His work goes more securely on, when there are no Religious apprehensions to check it: *Allow'd Vice* cannot be at ease if it but think those things are true. It is the infinite concern of *wickedness*, that the Laws of *Vertue* and *Religion* should be onely *Spiders webbs*, *Snares* for innocent and lesser *Flies*, while *venomous Spiders* can pass safely through them, and the *Wasps* can burst them; are Entanglements onely for the *Weak*, the *Phlegmatick*, and *Hypochondriack*: and that there should be no *God* that can bring them to an after-reckoning. They that flatter and betray, that hug and then trip up, or that plot villanies and ruines under fair and godly vizards; must needs be unwilling to believe that there is one who tries the reins, and searches hearts, and that will render every one according to his works. The Drunkard, who nor must nor can keep the remembrance of his Cups, cannot endure to apprehend he must be call'd to an account of them. The man whose Lust prevents the Grave, that putrefies alive, and drops by piecemeal into rotten dust ere he return to Earth, must needs be loth that there should be a Resurrection, to collect the scatter'd, the foul atomes of his Sin and his Disease, and shew them at that dread Tribunal, before *God*, his holy *Angels*, and *Mankind*. Such as these are the onely men that are concern'd against Religion. Here we see whose Interest such promote who promote *Infidelity*. And truly 'tis so much the *Devil's* Interest, that by those very measures that he weakens Faith, he strengthens every sort of Wickedness: By the steps and degrees of *Infidelity* men ascend towards the heights of sin: And when they have surmounted all Religious apprehensions, then they are upon the Precipice of Vice. When the Flood-gates are remov'd, the Torrent must break in impetuously. For what is there that can hinder? nothing certainly, if present Interest be not able: But 'tis plain that *Thieves*, and *Murderers*, and *Rebels*, in fine, every one whom we call *Sinners*, do pursue that which they account their present Interest: That therefore if there were no other, would not be sufficient, since the Devil does make use of that to work with under *Infidelity*. This indeed he batters, makes his spreading ruins with: Therefore *S. Paul* calls him Πνεῦμα ἀντιθέου ἢ τοῖς ἀπειθείας, the spirit that works in filii diffidentia, saith the Vulgar: In the Unbelievers, so it bears:

Jer. xvii. 10.

Ephes. ii. 2.

John. iii. 36.

in

in filiis insuasibilitatis, in the men that will not be persuaded to believe. In these *εὑρυπῆ* they are his *εὑρυπῆ*, Possess'd and agitated by him: 'tis he spirits what they do: their actions are his incitations and motions: In sum, as to wickedness, they are meet *Demoniacks*. This therefore is his chief and the first Engine.

The second Instrument by which he does demolish whatsoever hopes of Vertue we are built up to is *Want of Employment*: And in order to this, he hath so far prevail'd on the Opinions of the World, that they believe some states of men not onely have no Obligation to be busied, but to have *no Calling* is essential to their condition; which is made more eminent upon this account that they have *no business*. Wealth, how great soever, if with an employment or Profession, makes a man onely a more *gentile Mechanick*: But Riches and nothing to do make a *Person of quality*. As if God had made that state of men, far the most generous part of the whole kind, and best appointed for the noblest uses of the World, to serve no other ends but what the *Grashoppers* and *Locusts* do, to sing and dance among the Plants and Branches, and devour the Fruits; and Providence had furnished them with all advantages of Plenty for no better purposes. Such persons think not onely to reverse *Gods Curse*, and *In the sweat of others faces eat their bread*, but reverse Nature too; for Job saith, *Man is born to labour as the sparks fly upwards*; in his making Job v. 7. hath a Principle to which *Activity* is as essential as it is to fire to mount; from which nothing else but force can hinder it: As if man did *do violence* to his making when he did *do nothing*; and it were his hardest work and pressure, not to be employed; it were like making *flame go downwards*. I am sure it is one of the busiest ways of doing *Satan's work*. Our Saviour in a Parable in the 12. Chap. of S. Matth. from the 43. ver. saith, *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he goeth through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none: Then he saith, I will return into my* Verse 44. *house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits* 45. *more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there.* Where, under the similitude of a man cast out of his habitation, who, while he wanders through none but desert places seeking for a dwelling, he is sure to meet with none; but if he find an House that's empty, swept and garnished, he hath found out not a receptacle onely, but an invitation, an house dress'd on purpose to call in and to detain *Inhabitants*: He signifies, that when a Temptation of the Devil is repell'd, and himself, upon some working occasion, by a resolute act of holy courage thrown out of the heart, as he finds no rest in this condition, every place is *desert* to him but the heart of man, is indeed *Hell* to him, for he calls it *Torment* to be cast out thence; yea he accounts himself bound up in his eternal Chains of *darkness*; when he is restrained from working and engaging man to sin; so while he goeth to and fro, seeking an opportunity to put in somewhere, if he find that heart from which he was cast out, or any other heart, *εὐρυπῆ*, (so the word is) idling, not imploy'd or busied (so it signifies) such an heart is *empty, swept, and garnished* for him, 'tis a dwelling that's dress'd properly to tempt the Devil, fitted to receive him and his forces too, prepared for him to Garrison, and make a strong hold of, whence he cannot be removed; for he takes unto him *seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there.* No doubt they

Matth. viii. 29.

Luke viii. 31.

they are the *Patron-Guardian spirits* of the seven deadly Sins, their *Tutelar Devils*. Some of those good qualities that are the attendants of Idleness you may find decypher'd in the Scripture. S. Paul says, when people
 1 Tim. v. 13. *learn to be idle, they grow tattlers, busie bodies, speaking things which they ought not.* 'Tis strange that Idleness should make men and women *busie bodies*, yet it does most certainly in other folks affairs: *Faction*, than which nothing in the world can be more restless, is nurs'd by it. Where are States so censured, so new modell'd; as at certain of our *Refectories*, places that are made meerly for men to spend their time in which they know not what to do with? At those Tables our Superiours are dissected; Calumny and Treason are the common, are indeed the more peculiar entertainments of the places. In fine, where persons have no other employment for their time but *talking*, and either have not so much *Vertue* as to find delight in talking good things, or not so much skill as to speak innocent recreation, there they *talk of others, censure, and back-bite, and scoff.* This is indeed the onely *picquant* conversation; *Gall* is *sawce* to all their Entertainments: And that you may know these things proceed from that *old Serpent*, they do nothing else but *hiss* and *bite*.
 Rom. iii. 13. 'Tis the *poysen of Asps* that is under their lips which gives relish to their Discourses; 'tis the *sting* that makes them *grateful*, *venom* that they are condit with.

More of the brood of this want of Imployment you may find at *Sodom*; namely, *Pride* and *Luxury*: For saith *Ezekiel*, *This was the Iniquity of Sodom; Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of Idleness was in her and in her daughters.* And indeed the Idle person could not possibly know how to pass his hours, if he had not *Delicacies* to sweeten some, *Wine* to lay some asleep, and the solicitous deckings of *Pride* to take up others: But the studious gorgings of the inside, and the elaborate trimmings of the outside, help him well away with them.

Good God! that for so many hours my morning eyes should be *lift up* to nothing but a *Looking-glass*! that that thin shadow of my self should be my *Idol*, be my *God* indeed, to which I pay all the devotions I perform! And when with so much care and time I have arrayed and marshall'd my self, that I should spend as much more too in the complacencies of viewing this! with eager eyes and appetite surveying every part, as if I had set out, expos'd them to my self alone, and only dress'd a prospect for my own sight! and since Nature, to my grief, hath given me no eyes behind; that I should fetch reliefs from Art, and get vicarious sight, and set my back parts too before my face, that so I may enjoy the whole Scene of my self! And why all this? for nothing but to serve vain Ostentation, or negotiate for Lust, to dress a Temptation, and start Concupiscence. And that the half of each Day should be spent thus! the best part of a reasonable Creatures and a Christians life, be laid out upon purposes so far from Christian or reasonable!

And truly *Luxury* will easily eat the remainder up, that sure Companion of Idleness. For when the *Israelites* were in the Wilderness, where they could not eat but by *Miracle*, and the *Rock* must give them *drink*; yet, having no Imployment, they made *Feasts*: *They sate down to eat and drink and rose up to play.* Nor would eating to the uses of their nature serve them, but they must have entertainments for their wantonness. Had they been employed to get their Bread, their labour would have made

made their morsels sweet: But since God, as the Wise-man says, *sent them from Heaven bread prepared without their labour*, they must have varieties to sweeten it; they require him to *prepare a Table also in the Wilderness*, and furnish them with choice. And although they had the food of Angels, able to content every mans delight, and agreeing to every taste, and serving to the appetite of the eater, it temper'd it self to every mans liking, and what could they fancy more? The latitude of Creatures, the whole Universe of Luxury could do nothing else; in every single morsel they had sorts, Variety, all choice; as if that Desert had been Paradise, that Wilderness the Garden of the Lord: Yet so coy is Idleness, so apt to nauseate, that they abhor the constancy of being pleas'd. And though they were not sated neither, *he that gather'd much had nothing over, onely to his eating*, God as well providing for their Health and Vertue, as Necessity, and dicting their Temperance as he did their Hunger: Yet their very liking does grow loathsom to them. When their Bodies were thus excellently well provided for, having no employment, nothing to take up their Minds and Entertain their Souls, they require *meat for their Souls*, meat not to serve the uses of their bodies, but to feed their fancies, their extravagant minds. Thus Idleness requires to be dieted. And all this but to pamper and feed high mens inclinations, so to make Temptations irresistible, and by consequence Vice necessary.

Psal. lxxviii.
19, 25.
Wisd. xvi.
20, 21.

Exod. xvi. 18.

Psal. lxxvii.
v. 18.

Verse 7.

2 Sam. xi. 1, 2.

Ephes. vi. 16.

Job i. 11.

Matth. iv. 3.

It were easie to recount more of those ways by which the Devil does make use of mens want of Employment to debauch their lives, and ruin all the hopes of Vertue in them. S. Jude finds more of its effects at Sodom: *They gave themselves over to Fornication, and went after other flesh, and are set forth for an Example, suffering the vengeance of Eternal fire*. Indeed these are most certain consequents of not being employed: *Queritur Aegyptus*—is too known an instance: and great holy David is another. But its dire influence is sufficiently visible in that which it rain'd down upon those Cities. Since it did fulfill the guilt of Sodom, and made Heaven furnish Hell for it, and God himself turn Executioner of fire and brimstone to revenge it; this shall serve to prove it is one of the Devil's Master-pieces.

3. Next succeed his fiery darts, as S. Paul calls them, namely, *Persecutions*, or *Calamities* of any kind: Which he manageth either by inflicting pressures, and he was so confident of the force of these, that he did tell God he would make *Job curse him to his face* with them: Or if he find men in necessities and pressures, then by tempting them to get from under them by methods which he shall direct; and he had such assurance of the strength of this Temptation, that by it he tried our Saviour, to find out whether he were the Son of God or no, believing none but he that was so would be able to resist it.

Indeed the trials are severe which this Temptation does present, to draw men from their Duty, and to overcome their Constancy; Whether it solicite by inflicting punishment (as on the Mother and her Children, 2 Maccab. vii.) or by offering to withdraw it, if they will submit to their unlawful terms (and so they tried her youngest Son there, verse 24.) or at leastwise by some feigned act, some ambiguous words or practices, will pretend compliance; (so they dealt with Eleazar, Chap. vi. 21. whom they would have had to bring flesh of his own provision, such as he

might use without offence, and so onely seem to eat forbidden meat.) Each of which is as great a trial also, and to stand against them reckon'd up amongst as vigorous acts of Faith, as those that held out in the greatest tortures persecuting malice could invent : *Heb. xi. 17. They were stoned, sawn asunder, were tempted.*

Now to fetch an instance of the sad success of these, I shall not need to go so far as to those Persecutions of *Antiochus*, nor those of the *primitive times of Christianity*; when they had no other choices but these, to deliver up their *Bibles* or their *Lives*; either to *sacrifice* to *Idols*, or at least procure a *Ticket* which should certify that they had done it, or to be themselves an *Holocaust*, and give those *Idols* a *Burnt-offering* with their *martyr-flames*. Which made the *Traditores*, *Lapsi*, the *Thurificati* and the *Libellatici* to be so numerous. Through Gods blessed mercy there is no use of such instances, as there is no fear of such a trial; 'tis not death to be a Christian now : For if the *Son of Man* or *Satan's* self should come to try us at those rates, 'twere a great doubt whether the one or other would find Faith upon the Earth; whether they would sacrifice a life to our Religion, who are not content to sacrifice a little interest or pleasure to it; whether they are likely to resist unto blood fighting against sin, who will not resist to tears nor sober resolutions. Alas! what Religion should we be of, if God should raise a *Dioclesian*, come to tempt us with the fiery trial? Martyrs as we are to nothing but our Passions and our lusts! Nor shall I produce more known and near experiences, when, by reason of such storms of Persecution, men made shipwreck, if not of their Faith, yet of good Conscience. When by order or permissions of Providence they were brought to such a streight, that either they must let go their possessions or their honesty, acting against Principles, and Conscience of Duty: I shall not remember, how, when God did shake his angry hand thus over them, they fled to the Devils kindness, and made Hell their refuge, to save them from their Fathers rod: how they grew so Atheistical, as to believe a Perjury or other crime greater security, that would preserve their selves and their condition better than all God had promis'd; were such Infidels, that they did rather trust their being here to the commission of a sin, than to the Providence and the Engagements of the Almighty. For indeed what need I instance in these greater cases, where the trial was so sharp, as not to offer any easier choice than this, either to part with Conscience or with all they had? God knows, we find less Interests will do: The Devil by no more than this, driving the *Gadarens swine* into the Sea, was able to drive Christ out of their Coasts. You have the story *Matth. viii.* from the 28. verse. A legion of those evil spirits did possess two men; and finding Christ would cast them out, and by that Miracle so far shew forth his Power, that in probability the whole Countrey would believe on him, they fall upon this project to prevent it; they besought him, if he would cast them out, to suffer them to go into an herd of Swine there feeding; hoping by destroying them to incense the Owners against Christ: And, to try them, he permitted this. The possessed Swine ran violently down into the Lake, and perished. Now a man would think the virulency of these Devils, which were so destructive when they were at liberty and not restrained, would have endeared the mercy that had cast them out of the poor men, and came to dispossess the Countrey of them; and that their astonishment at so great

great a Miracle would possess them all with Reverence and belief of him; and that they would therefore seize and possess him also, and not let the mercy go: But, on the contrary; the whole City and Countrey came out to meet *Jesus*, and in consideration of the loss of their Swine, desire him to depart out of their Coast. Lo here an equal Enemy to Christ and all his Miracles, that was indeed too hard for them. The Senate of Hell had no project to keep our Religion like to this, to make Religion thwart an Interest. Rather no Christianity than lose an Earthly satisfaction by it: *Rather have the Swine than Christ himself.*

4. But if he chance to fail in this Assault (as by our Saviour he was beaten off) he hath yet a reserve in which he places his last, strongest confidence; with which he ventured to charge Christ, when it is probable he knew he was the *Son of God*. *He takes him up into an high* Matth. iv. 8, 9. *Mountain, and shews him all the Kingdoms of the Earth in the twinkling of an eye, and the glory of them, and says, All these things will I give thee.* He thought it was impossible for such a Prospect not to make impression on the Appetite, raise some desire, or stir one Covetous or Ambitious thought: which if it could but do, he made no scruple then to clog the Gift with such conditions as that there, *All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* 'Tis said indeed, the *Covetous man* Ephes. v. 5. *is an Idolater*: And here we see the God he does do homage to, and worship. The Devil does require, that those whom he gives Wealth to (now 'tis he that gives it to the *Covetous*, to all indeed that get it with *injustice* or with *greediness*;) he requires, I say, that these should pay all their Religion to Himself: And the *Ambitious*, in however high a place he sets them, must *fall down to him*. And truly these two dispositions can give worship to no other God but such an one as is *Abaddon*, the De- Rev. ix. 11. *stroyer of Mankind*. For all the great Commotions of the World, all those Convulsions that tear Provinces and Empires, all Seditions and Rebellions with those Armies of Iniquities that attend them, and that wage their Designs, which are upheld by legions of Villanies as well as men, all the Disturbances of States and Church, are but attempts of Covetous and Ambitious spirits, men that are unsatisfied with their condition, and desire a change, and care not how they compass it: They can charge through Seas of Bloud and Sin, over the face of Men and Conscience, to get out of that condition, which they therefore are not well content with; because something they like better beckens their ambitious and their covetous Desires. Would you see what one of these will venture at? When Christ our Saviour was to be betrayed, when a Person of the Godhead was to be delivered up and Crucified, the Devil had no passion to employ on that Design so fit as the *desire of getting money*; and when that desire was once entertain'd, we see he enters *really in person*, and *possesses* such John xlii. 2; 27. a Soul: and when he is there, he designs no farther but to warm and stir that passion: 'Tis sufficient fruit of his possession, he hath done enough in such an heart wherein he *dwells*, if he but keep alive that desire of Money; For he knows that will make the man adventure upon any guilt; for it made *Judas* undertake to betray *Christ*. And as for the other passion which the Devil did design the glories of his prospect to give fire to, though he could not stir it in our Saviour, yet he knew it vanquish'd him himself when he was *Angel*. What height is there which *Ambition* will not fly at, since it made this spirit aim at an equality with the

Isal. xiv. 14. the *Most High*? Heaven it self was not sufficient to content him, while there was a God above him in it. And since this affection peopled Hell with Devils, 'tis no wonder if it people Earth with *Miseries* and *Vices*.

Matth. iv. 4. 5. The remaining Trial with which Satan did assault our Saviour, when he tempted him with *Scripture* and *God's Promises*, and sought to ruine him with his own *priviledges*: with that also,

6. His being a *lying spirit* in the mouth of all the Prophets; by which long ago he did destroy an *Abab*, in the 1 Kings xxii. 22. But since by sad experience we know, he ruined the *best King*, purest *Church*, and most flourishing *State*, by the same Stratagem. But these, with those other which *S. Paul* does call his *wiles*, I must omit; sufficient hath been said already to inforce the necessity of *resisting*, which is the *Duty*, and the next considerable.

Ephes. vi. 11. *Resist the Devil*: That is, do not you consent to his Temptations: for there is no more required of us, but this onely, not to be willing to be taken and led captive by him. For let him suggest, incite, assault and storm us, no impression can be made upon us till we yield, and till we give consent no hurt is done. It is not here as in our other Wars: In those no resolution can secure the Victory, but notwithstanding all resistance possible, we may be vanquish'd; yea, sometime men are overpress'd and die with Conquering, and the Victor onely gains a Monument, is but buried in the heaps of his slain Trophies. But in these Wars with the Devil, whosoever is unwilling to be vanquish'd, never can be: For he must first give consent to it, and will the ruine; for men do not sin against their wills. Onely here we must distinguish betwixt Will and thin *Volleity* and *Woulding*. For let no man think when he commits deliberate iniquity with avernes and reluctancy of mind, allows not what he does, but does the evil that he would not, what he hates that he does; that this is not to be imputed to the Will; that in this case he is not willing, but here the *spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*, and yields through meer infirmity: For, on the contrary, the Devil finds the Flesh so strong in this case, that with it alone he does assault the mind, and breaks through its reluctancies and averfations, bears down all its resolutions, triumphs over all that does pretend to *God* or *Vertue* in him. Where 'tis thus, let no man flatter or persuade himself he *does what he would not*, when it is plain he does impetuously *will the doing it*. Let him not think that he *allows not*, but *hates* that which he does; when it is certain, in that moment that he does commit, not to *allow* that which he does *resolve* and *pitch upon* and *chuse*; to *hate* what with *complacency* he *acts*; or to do that *unwillingly* which he is wrought on by his own *Concupiscence* to do, and by his *inward incitations*, by the mutiny of his own *affections* which the Devil raises, and when it is the meer *height* and *prevailency* of his *appetite* that does make him do it (as it must be where there is reluctancy before he do it, his desires and affections there are evidently too strong for him) or at last, to *hate the doing* that which 'tis his too much *love* to that makes him *do*, are all impossibilities; the same things as to *will against the will*, *desire against appetite*. But do but keep thy self sincerely and in truth from being willing, and thou must be safe: For God expects no more but that we should not voluntarily yield to our undoing. He hath furnish'd us with his own compleat Armour for no farther uses of a War, but to encourage us to *stand*. Take unto you the whole
Armour

Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil: And again, *Put ye on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.* There is no need to do more than this, not to be willing and consent to fall; for no man can be beaten down but he that will fall.

13

It were very easie for me to prescribe you how to fortifie against those Engines of the Devils battery which I produced to you. But that I may not stay upon particulars, directing those whom he prevails upon through want of *Employment* to find out honest occasions not to be idle (and sure it is the most unhappy thing in the World, for any man to be necessitated to be vicious by his having nothing else to do, and because, while the World accounts it a *Pedantick* thing to be brought up by Rules and under Discipline, he cannot learn how to imploy himself to his advantage) to pass by these, I say, the universal strength against this Enemy is *Faith*. *Your adversary the Devil, like a roaring Lion, goeth up and down seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in the Faith.* And that not onely as it frustrates all that he attempts by means of *Infidelity*, but it also *quenches all his fiery darts*; whatsoever bright Temptation he presents to draw us from our Duty, or whatever fiery trial he makes use of to affright and martyr with. For the man whose Faith does give him *evidence and eye-sight* of those blessed Promises *eye hath not seen*, and gives *substance, present solid being* to his *after-hopes*, and whose heart hath swallowed down those happy expectations which *have never entered in the heart of man to comprehend*; what is there that can tempt or fright him from his station? To make all that which Satan gave the prospect of prevail on such a Soul, *the Kingdoms of the Earth* must out-vie *Gods Kingdom*, and their *Gauds* out-shine his *Glory*, and the *twinkling of an eye* seem longer than *Eternity*: For nothing less than these will serve his turn, all these are in his expectations. Or what can fright the man whose heart is set above the sphere of terrours? who knows calamity, how great soever, can inflict but a more sudden and more glorious blessedness upon him; and the most despiteful cruel usage can but persecute him into Heaven. 'Tis easie to demonstrate that a Faith and Expectation of the things *on Earth*, built upon weaker grounds than any man may have for his belief of *things above*, hath charg'd much greater hazards, overcome more difficulties than the Devil does assault us with. For sure none is so *Sceptical*, but he will grant that we have firmer grounds to think there is another World in Heaven, than *Columbus* (if he were the first Discoverer) had to think there was *another Earth*; and that there are far richer hopes laid up there in that other World, for those that do deny themselves the sinful profits and the jollities of this, and force them from their inclinations, than those Sea-men could expect who first adventur'd with him thither. For they could not think to gain much for themselves, but onely to take scisin of the Land (if any such there were) for others covetous Cruelty; could get little else but only *richer Graves*, and to lie *buried* in their *yellow Earth*. Nor are we assaulted in our Voyage with such hazards, as they knew they must encounter with; the *path of Vertue* and the *way to Heaven* is not so beset with difficulties as theirs was; when they must cut it out themselves through an unknown new World of Ocean, where they could see nothing else but swelling gaping Death, from an Abyfs of which they were but weakly guarded, and

1 Pet. 5. 9;

Ephes. vi. 16;

Heb. xi. 1;

1 Pet. 1. 8;

Heb. xi. 1;

and removed few inches onely; And as if the dangerousst shipwrecks were on shore, they found a Land more savage and more monstrous than that Sea. Yet all this they vanquish'd for such slender hopes, and upon so uncertain a belief. A weak Faith therefore can do mighty works; greater than any that we stand in need of to encounter with our Enemy: It can remove these Mountains too; the golden ones that Covetousness and Ambition do cast up: Yea more, it can remove the Devil also, for if you resist him stedfast in the Faith, he flies; which is the happy issue, and my last Part.

Deut. ix. 14.

Resist the Devil, and he will Fly from you. And yet it cannot be denied but that sometimes when the messenger of Satan comes to buffet, though S. Paul resist him with the strength of Prayer (which when Moses managed he was able to prevail on God himself, and the Lord articted with him, that he might be let alone) yet he could not beat off this assailant, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9. When God, either for prevention, as 'twas there, v. 7, or for exercising or illustrating of Graces, or some other of his blessed ends, gives a man up to the assaults of Satan, he is often pleased to continue the temptation long; but in that case he does never fail to send assistances and aids enough against it. *My grace is sufficient for thee,* saith he to S. Paul there. And when he will have us tempted for his uses (if we be not failing to our selves) he does prevent our being overcome; so that there is no danger in those Trials from their stay. But yet it must not be denied but that the Devil does prevail sometimes by importunacy, and by continuance of Temptation; so that Resistance is not always a Repulse, at least not such an one as to make him draw off and flie. It is not strange to find him siding with a natural Inclination, with the bent of Constitution, still presenting Objects, laying Opportunities, throwing in Examples, and all sorts of Invitation, always pressing so, that when a man hath struggled long he does grow weary of the service, not enduring to be thus upon his guard perpetually, watching a weak heart with strong inclinations, busie Devils do lay siege to; and so growing slack and careless, he is presently surpris'd: Or else, despairing that he shall be always able to hold out, lays hold upon a tempting opportunity, and yields; by the most unreasonable and basest cowardice that can be, yields, for fear of yielding; lest he should not hold out, he will not, but gives up; and puts himself into that very Mischief which he would avoid, meerly for fear of coming into it. For which fear there is no reason neither; For 'tis not here as in our other Sieges, where, if it be close, continuance must reduce men to necessity of yielding, Strengths and Ammunitions will decay, Provisions fail, and, if the Enemy cannot, their own Hunger will break through their Walls, and make avenues for Conquest, time alone will take them; but in these Spiritual Sieges, one Repulse inables for another; and the more we have resisted, the Temptation is not onely so much flatter, and more weak and baffled, but the inward Man is stronger: Victory does give new forces, and is sure to get in fresh and still sufficient supplies. For *God giveth more grace,* saith S. James: And, *they shall have abundance,* saith our Saviour. So that where the Devil after several repulses still comes on with fresh assaults, we may be sure he does discern there is some treacherous inclination that sides with him: And although the man refuse himself the satisfaction of the sin, the Devil sees he hath a mind to it, his refusals

James iv. 6.
Matth. xxv.
29.

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are but faint, not hearty; though he seem afraid to come within the quarters of the Vice, he keeps, it may be, correspondence with the incentives to it, entertains the opportunities, plays with the Objects, or at best he does not fortifie against him. Now this gives the Tempter hopes, and invites his assaults, and does expose the person to be taken by him.

But where he sees he is resisted heartily, his offers are received with an abhorrency, discerns Men are in earnest, watch to avoid all opportunities and occasions, and prepare, and fortifie, and arm against him, there he will not stay to be the *triumph of their Vertue*. We may know this by his *Agents*, those that work *under the Devil*, whom he hath instructed in the *mysteries of waging his Temptations*. Where they are not like to speed (and as to this they have *discerning spirits*) they *avoid*, and *bate*, and *come not near*, but study *spite* and *mischief* onely there. The intemperate men are most uneasy with a person whom they are not able to engage in the debauch; the *rudeness* and *brutality* of their excesses are not so offensive to the sober man, as his *staid Vertue* is to them; they do not more avoid the crude egestions, shameful spewings of their overtaken fellows Riot, then they do the shame and the reproach that such a man's strict Conversation casts on them, which does in earnest make them look more foul and nasty to themselves. In fine, every Sinner shuns the Company of those whom he believes Religious in earnest; 'tis an awe and check to them; they are afraid, and out at it, as their *Great Master* also is, who when he is resisted must be overcome: And as they that are beaten have their own *fears* also for their Enemies, which are sure to charge close, put to flight, chase and pursue them; so it seems he also is afraid of a sincere and hearty Christian, for he flies him: So he did from *Christ*, *Matth. iv. verse 11.* and so the Text assures, *If you resist him, he will flee from you.*

And now, although we all did once *renounce the Devil and his works*, were listed Soldiers against him, took a *Sacrament* upon it, and our Souls, the immortality of life or misery, depend upon our being true and faithful to our selves and Oaths, or otherwise; nor is there more required of us but *resolution* and *fidelity*, onely not to be *consenting* to our Enemies Conquest of us, not to will Captivity and Servitude: Yet as if, in meer defiance of our Vows and Interests, we not onely *will'd* the ruine, but would *fight for it*, we may find, instead of this *resisting of the Devil*, most men do *resist the Holy Ghost*; *quench not the fiery darts of Satan*, but the *Spirit* and his flames, by which he would enkindle love of God and Vertue in them. If he take advantage of some warm occasion to inflame their courage against former follies, heat them into resolutions of a change; as soon as that occasion goes off, they put out those flames, and choak these heats until they die. If he come in his *soft whispers*, speak close to the heart, suggest, and call them to those joys of which himself is *earnest*; to all these they shut their ears, can hear no whispers, are not sensible of any sounds of things at such a distance, *sounds* to which they give no more regard, than to things of the same extravagance with the *Musick of the Spheres*. Nay, if he come with his more active methods, as the *Angels* came to *Lot*, send *mercy* to allure and *take them by the hand*, as they did, to invite and lead them out of *Sodom*; if that will not, *Judgments* then to *thrust them out*, as they did also, come with *fire and brimstone* to affright them; they not onely like the men of *Sodom*,

Acts vii. 51.
Ephes. vi. 16.
1 Thess. v. 19.

Gen. xix. 16.

Verse 4, 9.

Ephes. iv. 30.

Isal. vi. 9.

Matth. xiii.

14 15.

John xiii. 40.

Acts xxvii. 26.

Rom. xi. 8.

Ezek. xxxiii.
11.

dom, do attempt a violence and Rape upon those very Angels, but they really debauch the Mercies, and profane the Judgment, having blinded their own Eyes, that they might see no hand of God in either: using thus unkindly all his blessed methods of reclaiming them, till they have grieved him so that he forsake and leave them utterly. As if they had not heard that when the Holy Spirit is thus forc'd away, the evil spirit takes his place, 1 Sam xvi. 14. As if they knew not that to those who close their eyes and stop their ears against the Holy Spirit's motions, till they are grown dull of hearing and blind to them, God does send a spirit of slumber, that they should not see nor hear; and that for this dire reason, that they may not be converted, nor be saved. Five times he affirms it in the Scripture. Yea, once more in words of a sad Emphasis, 2 Thess. ii. 12, 13. He sends them strong delusions that they may believe a lye, that they all may be damn'd who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness: And that, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. Blessed God! Is it so easie for such Sinners to believe and be converted, that thy self shouldst interpose to hinder it, and hide the possibilities of mercy from their eyes, that they may never see them, nor recover! What can then become of those for whom God does contrive that they shall not escape: when instead of those bowels that did make him swear he would not have the sinner die, but would have him return and live, he puts on so much indignation at such Sinners, as to take an order they shall not repent; and take an order that they shall be damn'd.

And yet all this is onely to those men, who, being dull of hearing the suggestions of the Spirit, and not willing to give entertainment to his holy motions, grieve him so, that they repell and drive him quite away; and so by consequence onely make way for the Devil: Whereas there are others that directly call him, force him to them, ravish and invade occasions to serve him. Some there are that study how to disbelieve, and with great labour and contrivance work out arguments and motives to persuade themselves to Atheism: Others practise, discipline, and exercise themselves to be engag'd in Vice. Some dress so as to lay baits, snares, to entrap Temptation, that they may be sure it may not pass them: Others feed high to invite and entertain the Tempter, do all that is possible to make him come, and to assure him that he must prevail, when they have made it most impossible for themselves to stand and to resist.

Some there are indeed whom he does not overcome so easily, but is put to compound with them, takes them upon Articles: for when he would ingage them to a sin to which he sees they have great inclinations, with some fears, he is fain to persuade them to repent when they have done; to lay hold upon the present opportunity, and not let the satisfaction escape them, but be sorry after, and amend. For where these resolutions of Repentance usher in transgression, there we may be sure it is the Devil that suggests those resolutions. But if he can get admittance once thus, by prevailing with a person to receive him upon purposes of after-Penitence; he is sure to prosper still in his attempts upon the same condition: For Repentance will wash out another sin, if he commit it; and so on. And it is evident that by this very train he does draw most men on through the whole course of sin and life: For never do they till they

they see themselves at the last stage, begin repenting. When they are to grapple with *Death's forces*, then they are to set upon *resisting of the Devil*: And when they are grown so weak that their whole Soul must be employed to muster all its spirits, all their strength, but to beat off one little spot of phlegm, that does besiege the *avenues of breath, the ports of life*, and *sally at it*, and *assault it*, once, again, and a third, many times, and yet with all the fury of its might cannot break through, nor beat off that little clot of spittle; when it is thus, yet then are they to *wrestle with, and Conquer Principalities and Powers, all the Rulers of the* Ephes. vi. 12. *utter darkness, pull down the strong holds of sin within, cast down imaginations, and every high thing that did exalt it self against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5: and with those feeble hands that they are scarcely able to lift up in a short wish, or prayer, they must do *all this; resist the Devil*, and take Heaven by force.

Now sure to put it off to such a fatal season is a purpose of a desperate concern. In God's Name let us set upon the doing it while there is something left of *Principle* and vigor in us, ere we have so *griev'd Gods Spirit*, that he do resolve to leave us utterly; and before the Devil have so broke us to his yoke, that we become content and pleas'd to do his drudgery. We deceive our selves if we think to do it with more ease when Constitution is grown weaker; as if then Temptations would not be so strong: For the Habits will be then *confirm'd, Vice grown Heroical*, and we wholly in the *power of Satan*, dead and senseless under it, Acts 26. 18. not so much as stirring to get out. But if we strive before he have us in his clutches, we have an Enemy that can vanquish none but those who consent to, and comply and confederate with him, those that will be overcome: So that if we *resist*, he must be *Conquer'd*; and Temptation must be conquer'd too, for *he will flie*, and then by consequence must cease to trouble and molest us. This is the sure way to be rid of Temptations, so put to flight the great *Artificer* and *Prince* of them, subdue and overcome *him* and *our selves*: And to him that *overcometh thus* Rev. iii. 21: *Christ will grant to sit with him on his Throne, as He also overcame, and sate down with his Father on his Throne.*

To which, &c.

The following information was obtained from the records of the [redacted] Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, regarding the [redacted] land grant.

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The Fourteenth
SERMON,
 Preached at
WHITE-HALL.

Last Wednesday in LENT, 1667.

PHILIPP. III. 18.

For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the Enemies of the Cross of Christ.



Though many by the Cross of Christ here understand any sort of Suffering for the sake of Christ or Religion (it being usual with the Scripture to entitle *Christ* to every evil that befalls a man for doing of his duty,) yet others looking on it *properly* as that on which *Christ* himself suffered, by the *Enemies of the Cross* understand those that set themselves against the whole design and influence of *Christ's* death upon it.

Now to name that in few words, the Cross of Christ not onely is one of the greatest Props on which our Faith of the whole Gospel leans, which it establisheth the truth of as *Christ's* Blood shed upon it was the sanction of the Covenant on Gods part, who by that federal Rite of shedding Blood engag'd himself; and we may certainly assure our selves, he cannot fail to make good whatsoever he hath promised in that Covenant, who would give the Blood of his own only Son, who was so holy, and who was himself to Seal that Covenant; and his Blood is therefore called *the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant*.

Heb. xiii. 20;
 & 10. 29.

But besides this extrinsick influence of it, all the blessed Mercies also of the Gospel, are the Purchase of this Cross, and all the main essential duties of the Gospel are not onely Doctrines of the Cross, such as it directs and does inforce, but the Cross also hath an immediate efficacy in the

Gal. 4.

the working of them in us: For S. Paul saith *by the Cross of Christ the World is Crucified to me and I unto the World.* On it the *Flesh* is also crucified with the *Affections and Lusts*: And to say all that comprehensive Duty of the Gospel, *Self-denial*, is but another word for *taking up the Cross*: And then as for the Mercies of the Gospel on the Cross the satisfaction for our sins was made, the Price of our Redemption paid, and that effected: There was wrought our *Reconciliation* with our God; Lastly, that was the consideration upon which Grace was bestowed whereby we are enabled to perform our duty: With good reason, therefore S. Paul calls the Gospel *λογος σταυρου*, the word or Doctrine of the Cross; so that the Enemies of the Cross of Christ are in a word the Enemies of Christianity, and so the blessed Polycarpe in his Epistle to these same *Philippians* seems to understand it: And they that walk as Enemies to it, are such as do not only hate the Duties of the Gospel, those especially which the Cross directly does enforce; but their course of life is order'd so as to break the very Frame and Power of Christianity, they set themselves against all that Christ came to do upon and by the Cross, resist, and wage War with the Doctrines, and by consequence oppose the mercies of it.

1 Cor. i. 18.

Poly. & Ignat.
Ep. p. 23. Edit.
Hessarian. pro
persequentibus
& odientibus
vos, & pro ini-
miis crucis.

The words being thus explain'd, I have no more to do but only answer two Enquiries which they give occasion for.

The first is, What sort of men those are that walk as Enemies to the Cross, and wherein their hostility does express it self?

The second is, What the danger and the sadness is of that condition, that they should make S. Paul think it necessary frequently to warn them of it, and to do it now with so much passion? For many walk, saith he, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, &c.

First for the first. And here I shall not strive to give you in a perfect list of all that walk as Enemies to the Cross, but shall take that which S. Paul hath made ready to my hands in the next words.

And first the Enemies which he brings up in the front, are the Sensualists, the Men whose God is their Belly.

Secondly, They whose glory is in their shame.

Thirdly, Who mind Earthly things, to which as being their confederates, and near Allies I shall add

Fourthly, Those that he reckons up in the 1 Cor. i. the wise men of this World.

First, The Sensualists.

That Men who diligently mind the serving of their appetite in Meats and Drinks, that study and contrive its pleasure, and with industry have learn'd, and practise Arts of Luxury, and in those have set up their delights, that these should be accounted Enemies of the Cross of Christ there is but too much reason. For their course of life is perfect opposition to that Cross, and to the whole design of Christianity, and to the very being of all Vertue. For since Vertue is but moderation and restraint of Appetites and Passions, and since sensuality indulges, and does raise and heat them: since the whole design of Christianity, is to mortify the deeds of the Body, those our members upon earth, that Body of Sin and Death; and since Voluptuousness quickens, pampers and does make them vigorous; lastly, since the Doctrines and the Influences of the Cross of Christ do aim at Crucifying the flesh with its Affections and Lusts, and Luxuries

Luxuries do gorge and make them ramping, sure the Enmity is too apparent to be prov'd.

It is the business of Religion to instruct and frame men into reasonable Creatures: God himself chose to die upon the Cross that we might live like Men here, and then afterwards die into Sons of God, and become equal to the Angels.

He suffered on the Tree, that we might be renewed into that constitution which the Tree of Knowledge did disorder and debauch. Before Man ate of that, his lower Soul was in perfect subordination to his mind, and every motion of his appetite did attend the dictates of his Reason, and obey them with that resignation and ready willingness which our outward faculties do execute the Wills commands with; then any thing, however grateful to the senses, was no otherwise desired than as it serv'd the regular and proper ends and uses of his making; there was a rational harmony in all the tendencies of all his parts, and that directed, modulated by the rules and hand of God that made them: In fine, *then Grace was Nature, Vertue Constitution.*

Now to reduce us to this state as near as possible is the business of Religion (as it had been in some kind the attempt also of Philosophy.) But this it can in no degree effect, but as it does again establish the subordination of the sensual to the reasonable part within us: That is, till by denying satisfactions to the Appetite (which is now irregular and disorderly in its desires) we have taught it how to want them, and to be content without them, and by that means have subdu'd its inclinations; or by taking down the Body have abated of its powers and its provocations; and where it is stubborn, heady, and rebellious, there by cutting off provisions from the flesh, and by sharp methods vanquish'd and reduc'd it into a condition of Obedience; and (whenever that is also necessary) weakens so that insolent untam'd part of our selves, that we make it lie fainting, groveling at our feet (these are the Doctrines of the Cross, and this the method of its Discipline:) And withal by those rational and divine heavenly encouragements which above all Doctrines in the World our Christianity suggests and furnisheth with infinite advantage, have so fortified the mind that it resumes its principality, governs, and carries on the lower Soul in its obedience to Duty easily without resistance, as they say the higher Heaven moves the inferiour Orbs along with it although their proper tendencies are contrary: At leastwise if impressions from without or inbred inclinations stir, raise passions, and mutinies, yet the mind keeps so much power that they shall not beat it off, and force it from its prosecutions of good; nor shall, unless by a surprize, engage its consent in the pursuit of evil. This is that which Religion aims at, thus to make us men, teach us to live according to our nature, to put Reason in the Throne, and vindicate the Spirit from the tyranny of its own Vassal flesh.

But sensuality is most perfect opposition to this whole design; for it renverses that subordination without which there is no possibility of Vertue as I shew'd you; and it puts that whether Lust or Passion in the Throne, which either constitution, conversation, or whatever accident, did give possession of our inclinations to: And makes the strangest prodigy of *Centaure* where the *Beast is uppermost and rides the man*; where the *Beast is God* indeed; for the sensual man acknowledges no other God but

but his own *belly*, so S. Paul does character him here. And truly if we look on the attendances, and careful services he gives it, and how studiously and wholly he does consecrate himself to please it, one would think it most impossible he should have any other God: but if we number the *drink-offerings*, and *meat-offerings*, the whole *Hecatombs* he gives it, and whereas other Deities had onely some peculiar appropriate Creatures for their Sacrifices, how this Vorary rifles the Universe, goes through the whole latitude of beings for Oblations, one would think he did out-number all the Heathen Legions in his Gods; and yet all this is onely for his Belly. Now he that deifies his Appetite, and that is so attent and so solicitous in its service, he that sets up such an *Antigod* as this to Christ, appears a scornful insolent Enemy to *Him*, his *Cross* and his *Religion*, near the state of those men whom the Wise-man couples with the sensual, persons of an *impudent mind*, the very disposition of those Enemies of the Cross of Christ whom S. Paul brings up in the *second* place,

Those that glory in their shame.

Amongst the uses of the Cross of Christ, one chiefly meant, was by the ignominy of that most accursed infamous punishment to represent the vileness of Iniquity; to which shame and confusion were so due, that there were to be Contumelies as well as Agonies in the Death that was to expiate it; And it seems not sufficient that the *Blood of God* be shed for it, but that Blood must be stain'd too with the *imputation of a Malefactor*; Christ was to suffer the insulting scorns and vilifyings of his Crucifiers, his Honour must be sacrific'd as well as his Life, *Barabbas* must be prefer'd even before that *Person of the Trinity* to whom sin was to be imputed, and who was to bear the just shame of it, such infinite debasement and contempt being a most essential ingredient in the wages of Iniquity, of which this Cross of Christ was the express.

And then how is it possible for men to wage a more profess'd hostility against the Cross of Christ, than by endeavouring to put *Reputation* on the thing on which that Cross was set to throw *Disgrace*: by raising *Trophies* to themselves for that which raised a *Gibbet* to their Saviour? giving themselves a *value* for the thing which hath such infinite diminution in it, that it made the *Son of God* esteemed worse than *Barabbas*.

These men are too successful Enemies of the Cross that thus triumph over it, and when it was erected as an Ensign to display the vileness of iniquity, and to shame sin out of the lives of mankind, vindicate and rescue sin from that contempt, and throw the Cross and shame upon Religion it self; while they exult in their commissions as in commendable things, and too truly verifying the Apostles aggravations against wilful Sinners, *Crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame*, while they put scorns on that contempt he suffered: For the Agonies and Contumelies he endured on that account of sin must needs be most ridiculous to them who count Sin gay and Honourable. Thus they trample and insult upon his Passion, thus tread underfoot the Son of God even on his Cross, and upon that footstool they exalt themselves by putting sin in countenance and credit with the Age. For it is plain it is so when men once can *glory* in it: For our actions raise a glorying in us onely in relation to the sentiments of others,

others, that growing from a confidence of having praise and value for them in the World. So that they must assure themselves that most men or the most considerable will applaud their Vices; otherwise they could not glory in them, but would be ashamed. And such a judgment we may safely pass upon an Age or Nation; where great Crimes not onely have impunity but Reputation; and men glory in them. Had it been so in the Heathen World when Christ and his Cross first appeared there, Christianity had wanted one of its convincing pleas. *Tertullian* in his Apology for our Religion to them that blasted it with all imaginable imputations of Impiety, discourseth thus:

Omne malum aut timore aut pudore Natura perfudit; Nature hath dash'd every Vice with fear or shame; all Malefactors labour to lie hid, and if they are laid hold upon they tremble, and deny when they are accus'd, hardly confess it to the Rack; and when they are found guilty they bewail, upbraid themselves, and aggravate confessions of their Crimes. *Christianus vero quid simile?* But what does the Christian like this? None of us is ashamed of his Religion, or repents, except it be because he was not sooner of it: If he be branded for it he rejoiceth, if you accuse him of it he does own it, triumphs in it; if he be condemned for it he calls his Execution his Martyrdom, his sufferings his Crown. *Quid hoc mali est quod naturalia mali non habet?* Now what strange kind of impiety is this that hath none of the natural affections of it? not the shame nor fear, tergiversations or repentance, or deplorings of it? *Quid hoc mali est cujus reus gaudet, cujus excusatio votum est, & pœna felicitas?* What a kind of evil's this, which he that is found guilty of is glad? to be accus'd of it is his ambition? to suffer for it is his happiness?

Alas, the World hath taught Vice now adays to use this plea with a much greater confidence, and he that would apply this argument to our experiences might plead thus for the Religion of sin. For now they are but piteous pious sinners who feel those things which in *Tertullians* days were natural and essential to sin, to blush, and be ashamed, and have regrets. Men do not onely own it as those primitive persons did their Christianity, but they out-vie the Martyrs heats; for they accuse themselves, and boast of their performances in Villany, yea falsity, belye themselves in sin, and usurp Vice, steal the glorious Reputation of exceeding sinfulness, as if the impiety were meritorious.

And truly as that Christian Confidence and Magnanimity brought in the World as Profelytes to the Cross, so this other confidence brings Sholes of Votaries to Vice: For when once there is no need to be ashamed of it, there are but very few but will venture to commit it. And indeed this sort of men do manage their hostility so dexterously, as to use those very Weapons. Christianity was successful with, against it self. 'Twas by a discipline of shame (for that was the great strength of the Church Censures) that our Religion did at first prevail almost to the exterminating Vice out of the World: The temporal Sword was never so victorious as this weapon of our Spiritual Warfare was, which yet in those times drew no blood, unless it were into the face, in blushes. But since men have found or made pretexts to glory in iniquity, and several Crimes are become honourable; Vertues are dress'd up as mean, poor spirited, sneaking qualities; some look melancholick, sad, are hypo-

condriack, some pedantick, some unmanly, some irrational, and worse; so that men are now asham'd of Duty; 'tis a disparagement to own the doing it: Thus they have as it were *excommunicated Religion*. It is accounted a contemptible, or at best foolish thing; which is the very sentence of the *third* sort of Enemies the *Wise men of this World*, those *ταῖς ἐπιγείαις φρονεῖντες*, *that mind earthly things* (the fourth sort) in which all their wisdom lies. Which two last sorts of Enemies I shall attack together.

Gal. vi. 14.

The Cross of Christ amongst its other ends was set to be an instrument *whereby the World is to be Crucified to us, and we unto the World*; to be the means whereby we are enabled to prevail upon and overcome our worldly lusts and inclinations; and to sleight, yea and detest all the temptations of its Wealth, Delights, and Heights, when they attempt to draw us into sin or take us off from Duty. Now to this it works by these three steps.

Matth. xvi. 24.

First, shewing us *the Author and the finisher of our Faith* nailed himself to that Cross; his joints rack'd on it, his whole Body strip'd, and nothing else but Vinegar and bitter potions allow'd his thirst: and thus convincing us that *if we will be his Disciples we must take up his Cross and follow him*, at leastwise we must have preparedness of mind to take it up when ever it is fix'd to Duty; to renounce all profits, honours, and delights of this World that are not consistent with our Christian profession: This is the Doctrine of the Cross of Christ; it being otherwise impossible to be the Disciples of a Crucified Master. And when this great *Captain of our Salvation* was himself consecrated by his sufferings, and had for his Standard his own Body lifted up upon the Cross, we that are lifted under him, and with that very badg the Cross too, *crucis Consecranei*, Votaries and fellow Soldiers of that Order, if we shall avoid our Duty when it is attended with a Cross, or straitned any ways, and the provisions of this World are cut off from it, and betake our selves rather to the contents of Earth; we do not onely shamefully fly from our Colours; Fugitive, and Cowards, Poltrons in the Spiritual Warfare; but are Renegadoes, false and traytours to our selves too, such as basely ran away not onely from our Officer, but from Salvation, which he is the Captain of; and which we cannot possibly attain, except we be resolv'd to follow him, and charge through whatsoever disadvantages to attend Religion, vanquishing all those temptations with which the World assaults us in our course to Duty. Thus the Cross of Christ first shews us the *necessity* we have to renounce and *Crucifie the World*.

But to encourage and enable us to do so, it does also shew us

Secondly, The *certainty of a good issue* in the doing it, assures us, that those who deny themselves forbidden satisfactions here, that will be vertuous maugre all the baits and threats of Earth, will embrace Duty when it is laden with a Cross, although so heavy as to crush out life, and kill the body; assures us that those lose not, but exchange their lives, shall save their Souls, and that there is another World wherein their losses shall be made up to them, and repaired with all advantage. To the truth of this the Cross of Christ is a most pregnant and intalible testimony. For as by multitudes of Miracles Christ sought to satisfie the World that he was sent from God to promise all this, and justified his Power to perform it by experiment, raising some up from the dead;

so when they said he did his Miracles by *Beelzebub*, he justified it further with his Life; affirming that he was the Son of God (no 'tis impossible but he must know whether he were or no) and consequently sent and able to do all he promised, and resolv'd to do it also for our more assurance in himself, that he would raise himself up from the dead within three days; and saying this when he was sure he should be Crucified for saying so, and sure that if he did not do according to his words, he must within three days appear a meer Impostor to the world, and his Religion never be receiv'd.

Now 'tis impossible for him that must needs know whether all this were true or no to give a greater testimony to it than his Life. For this that Blood and Water that flowed from his wounded side upon Cross, which did assure his Death, is justly said to bear witness to his being the Son of God, and consequently to the truth of all this, equal to the testimony of the Spirit (whether that which the Spirit gave when he came from Heaven down upon him in his Baptism, or the testimony which he gave by Miracle;) for *there are three that bear witness upon Earth, the Spirit, the Water and the Blood.* Thus by his Death Christ did bring Life and Immortality to light: his choosing to lay down his own life for asserting of the truth of all this, was as great an argument to prove it as his raising others from the dead: and *Lazarus's* empty Monument, and walking Grave-cloaths were not better evidence than this *Cross of Christ.* 1 John v. 8.

4. Once more, this Cross not onely proves the certainty of a future state, but does demonstrate the advantage of it; and assures us that it is infinitely much more eligible to have our portion in the life to come than in this life: That to part with every thing that is desirable in this World rather than to fail of those joys that are laid up in the other, that to be poor here or to be a spoyle, to renounce or to disperse my wealth, that so I may lay up treasures for my self in Heaven, and may be rich to God; never to taste any one of these puddle transient delights, rather than to be put from that right hand where there are pleasures for evermore; to be thrown down from every height on Earth, if so I may ascend those everlasting Hills, and Mount Sion that is above; that this is beyond all proportion the wisest course it does demonstrate; since it shews us him who is the *Son of God*, who did create all these advantages of Earth, and prepare those in Heaven, and does therefore know them both: Who also is the *Wisdom of the Father*, and does therefore know to value them, yet *for the joys that were set before him choosing to endure the Cross and despising the shame.* Heb. xii. 2. On that Beam he weigh'd them, and by that his choice declar'd the Pomps of this World far too light for that *exceeding and eternal weight of Glory*; that the whole earth was but as the dust upon the Ballance and despis'd it, and to make us do so, is both the Design and direct influence of the Cross of Christ. 1 Cor. iv. 17.

But as at first the *Wise men of this World* did count the *Preaching of the Cross* meer folly, to give up themselves to the belief and the obedience of a man that was most infamously Crucified, and for the sake of such an one to renounce all the satisfactions, suffer all the dire things of this Life, and in lieu of all this onely expect some after Blessednesses and Salvations from a man that they thought could not save himself,

himself, seemed to them most ridiculous: So truly it does still appear so to the carnal reasonings of that sort of men, who have the same objections to the Cross of Christ, as it would Crucify the World to them, and them to it; as it would strip them of all present rich contents, and give them certain evils, with some promises of after good things, which they have no taste for, nor assurance of.

Now this being in their account folly, then the contrary to this they must think Wisdom: as it is indeed *the Wisdom of this World*; which Wisdom since it does design no further than this World, and hath no higher ends than Earth and its Felicities, it must needs put men upon minding the acquist and the enjoyment of these Earthly things, for that is onely to pursue and to achieve their ends, to catch at and lay hold on their felicity; and accordingly we see it does immerse them wholly in those cares. So that it is no wonder if their God and Religion can get no attendance from them, it being most impossible they should, when Mammon hath engaged them in the superstitious services of Idolatry; and when they sacrifice their whole selves to pleasure and make their bodies the burnt offerings of their Lusts, and when Ambition, even while it makes them stretch and climb and mount, causes them also to fall low, prostrate, make their temper, nature stoop, lie down to every humour, and to every Vice they think themselves concern'd to court and please.

And though a man would think these so great boundless cares are very vain and foolish upon several accounts; for common sense as well Luke xli. 15. as Scripture does assure us that *this life* and the Contents of it do *not consist in the abundance of the things that we possess*; that it is all one whether my draught come out of a small Bottle or an Hoghead; the one of these indeed may serve excess, and sickness better, but the other serves my Appetite as well; the one may drown my Vertue, but the other quenches thirst alike. And every days experience also does convince us, that the least cross accident, pain or affliction on our persons or some other that is seated near our hearts, or the least vexation or cross passion will so sow all those advantages, that we cannot possibly enjoy them while we have them; sickness makes the richest plenty only a more nauseous trouble, a more costly loathing; then the poorest Soul that is in health is that great rich mans envy.

And there's no man also but does see so far into futurity as to satisfy himself that he shall die, and then the shadow of Death will cloud and put out all these Glories. And universal Reason also does tell every man that to deny himself or want his present satisfactions of this helpless dying kind, and suffer present evils, is in prudence to be chosen for avoiding of a future evil or achieving of a good to come which do transcend those other infinitely, and to all Eternity continue. Sure as no man pities the poor Infant in the Womb because he lies imbrued in Blood, hath no inheritance there at all, is fetter'd, confin'd as it were in that dark Cell; if he be to be born to an Estate, to live a full age here in gaiety of mind, and health of body, in Reputation, and all plenty of delights, we never are concern'd or troubled at his other nine months Dungeon. So if this life be to the next as the Womb is to this; and if our hopes be no more on the Earth than in the Belly; and we have no inheritance or abiding place here, as we had not there; although
the

the waters of affliction, and to be in our blood should be as natural to us as to the Child, yet if we thus press forward to the other birth, to be delivered into immortality of joys, this state were not to be lamented, but endeavoured for with all our powers. Lastly, the same reason does assure us, that if those futurities (which are most certain) were but only possible, yet to part with every thing, and suffer any thing here to prevent miscarriage in relation to those two Eternities is certainly the safest course, and then by consequence the wisest. And this does appear a truth to all men when they go to die: And if it be the truth then, 'tis always so.

Yet notwithstanding all this, he that minds these earthly things, whose heart is set upon them, whose desires the World serves, provides to satisfy every imagination of delight: His heart is so intangled in affections to them, and in prejudices for them, and hath so imbib'd the impressions of them, that he hath no taste for any other, and by consequence no satisfying notions of them: And if he hath not then it is not possible that he should really and from his heart, out of conviction and inward sense value these beyond the earthly ones: and it is plain we see he does not; and if he do not, to deprive himself of all the sweet contentments of his life, and tear out his own bowels that yearn after them, and cling to them; and instead of those embrace a Cross, and do this for things which he cannot value more, and counts uncertain, he must needs think a mad folly: Consequently to contrive and seize the present to the best most plentiful advantage is the wisest course; and therefore they that by whatever arts do thrive, advance themselves, live high and in delights, they are Wise men; because they do attain their ends, by means appropriate to those ends.

And now the enmity betwixt the Cross of Christ and the wisdom of the World appears: first, their designs are most directly opposite; the cross designs to take us up from earth and from its satisfactions, which have also thorns and bryars in them, that Earths Curse, things that pierce and wound as fatally as the Nails and Thorns and other cruelties of Christ's Cross; and to lift us towards Heaven, to direct our hearts and our affections thither as our harbingers, to take possession for us of those joys the Cross did purchase for us, but no Cross can ever trouble. But the Wisdom of this World designs to lay out all its cares and its contrivances within this World, minds nothing else but earthly things, and does not lift an eye or thought to any other.

Secondly, Their Principles wage war: For earthly good things being the design, the main end of this worldly wisdom, consequently that does justify all courses without which men cannot gain those ends, by which they do, though they be never so unlawful by the Rules of that which we call Vertue and Religion; it does justify, I say, all such as prudent. But the Principles of the Doctrines of the Cross of Christ are positive, that we must renounce all earthly satisfactions, when they cannot be enjoyed without transgressing Christ's Commands, and imbrace Duty even when it executes it self upon us.

But Thirdly, there's no enmity so fatal to the Cross of Christ as is the practice of those men who minding Earthly things, and all their wisdom lying as to them, they therefore think themselves concern'd to represent the Doctrines of the Cross, which does so contradict their wisdom,

Tertul. Apol.
c. 16.
Tertul. ad Nat.
c. 11.
Ibid.

dom, as meer madness, and the Cross it self as the Ensign of folly ; And accordingly they do, treat it *en ridicul*; and make the proper Doctrines of it, the strict duties of Religion, matter for their jests, and bitter scoffs : They character Religion as a worship that befits a God whose shape the Primitive persecutors painted Christ in, *Deus Onochates*, as if Christianity were proper Homage onely to an *Asses person*, as *Tertullian* words it ; And the Votaries transform'd by this their service and made like the God they worship, were what they were call'd then *Asinarii* creatures onely fit for burthen, to bear, what they magnifie, a Cross and scorns. No persecutions are so mortal as those that Murther the reputation of a thing or person ; not so much because when that is fallen once then they cannot hope to stand, as because those *murder after death*, and *poison memory, killing to immortality*. They were much more kind to Religion and more innocent that cloath'd the Christians in the *skins of Bears and Tygers*, that so they might be *worried into Martyrdom* ; Than they that cloath their Christianity in *fools Coat*, that so it may be *laugh'd to death*, go out in ignominy and into contempt. If to sport with things of sacred and Eternal consequence were to be forgiven, yet to do it with the Cross of Christ : Thus to set that out as *foolishness* which is the greatest mystery the *Divine wisdom* hath contriv'd to make *mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other*, to make sin be punish'd, yet the Sinner pardoned : Thus to play and sin upon those dire expresses of Gods indignation against sin, are things of such a sad and dangerous concern, that *S. Paul* could not give a caution against them but with tears, *For many walk, saith he, of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping, &c.* Which calls me to my *last* Consideration.

Indeed the Cross of Christ does represent Almighty God in so severe a shape, and gives the lineaments of so fierce displeasures against sin, as do exceed all comprehension. There was a passion in Christs Prayer to prevent his Passion, when he deprecated it with strong cries and tears, yea when his whole body wept tears as of blood to deprecate it ; and yet he cryed more dreadfully when he did suffer it ; The Nails that bor'd his Hands, the Spear that pierc'd his Heart and made out-lets for his Blood and Spirits, did not wound him as, that sting of death and torments, sin did, which made out-lets for God to forsake him, and which drove away the Lord that was himself out of him. Neither did his God forsake him only, but his most Almighty attributes were engag'd against him : Gods Holiness and Justice were resolv'd to make Christ an example of the sad demerit of Iniquity, and his hatred of it : Demerit so great, as was valuable with the everlasting punishment of the World, fall'n Angels and fall'n Men ; for to that did it make them liable. Now that God might appear to hate it at the rate of its deservings, it was very necessary that it should be punish'd, if not by the execution of that sentence on Mankind as on the Devils, yet by something that might be proportionable to it, so to let us see the measures God abhors it by, to what degrees the Lord is just and holy by those torments, torments answerable to those attributes.

Now truly when we do reflect on this we cannot wonder if the Sinner be an enemy to the Cross, and hate the prospect of it, which does give him such a perfect copy of his expectations, when our Saviours draught which he so trembled at shall be the *everlasting portion of his Cup* : For if God did so plague the *imputation* of Iniquity, how will he torment the *wilful and impenitent commission* of it.

But

But then when we consider those torments were the satisfaction for the sins of man, methinks the Sinner should be otherwise affected to them: Christ by bearing the Cross gave God such satisfaction, as did move him in consideration thereof to dispence with that strict Law, which having broken we were forfeit to eternal Death, and to publish an act of Grace whereby he does admit all to pardon of sins past, and to a right to everlasting Life that will believe on him, forsake their sins and live true Christians. He there appears the *Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the World*, for that he does as being a *Lamb slain*, then he was our *Sacrifice*, and that Cross the *Altar*. And the humbled Sinner that repents (for, notwithstanding satisfaction, God will not accept a Sinner that goes on; by all those Agonies his holiness would not be justified, if when he had forsaken and tormented his own Son for taking sin upon him, he should yet receive into his favour and his Heaven, Sinners that will not let go, but will retain their sins: but the penitent) may plead this expiation: Lo here I poor Soul prostrate at the footstool of the Cross lay hold upon the Altar, here's my Sacrifice on which my sins are to be charg'd, and not on me, although so foul I am, I cannot pour out tears sufficient to cleanse me, yet *behold Lord, and see if there ever were any Sorrow like the sorrow of thy Son wherewith thou didst afflict him* for these sins of mine: And here is Bloud also, his Bloud to wash me in: and that Bloud is within the Vail too now, and that my Offering taken from the Cross up to thy Throne, thou hast accepted it, and canst not refuse it now my *Advocate* does plead it, and claims for me the advantage of the Cross.

John i. 36:
Rev. xiii. 8.
Heb. ix. 26.

Now that men should be Enemies to this, and when they are forfeit to eternal Ruine, hate that which is to redeem the forfeiture; that they should trample on the Cross whereon their satisfactions were wrought; tread down the Altar which they have but to lay hold on and be safe; wage war with, beat off, and pursue a Lamb, that *Lamb of God* that comes to *take away their sins*: and make a spoil and slaughter of their Sacrifice; hostilely spill upon the ground that Bloud, that was appointed for their Bloud upon the Altar, for their *blood of sprinkling*, and was to appear in Heaven for them. If men resolve to be on *terms of Duel* with their God, and scorn that *Satisfaction* shall be made for them by any other way than by *defiance*; and although their God do make the satisfactions for them to himself, yet not endure it, but chuse quarrel rather; this is so perverse and fatal an hostility as no tears are sufficient to bewail.

But possibly men sleight these satisfactions because some terms are put upon them which they know not how to comport with; the merits of the Cross must not be accounted to them but upon conditions which they are not able to perform; they are required to master all their wicked Customs, their untam'd appetites, and settled habits, to keep under their Concupiscence, to calm their inclinations and their passions: Now on such severe articles friendship with the Cross they think is too hard bought.

But therefore *Secondly*, the Cross was the consideration upon which Grace is offer'd us, whereby we are enabled to perform all this; the *power to will* and *strength to do*, all necessary aids from Heaven are granted to us as Christ merited them for us by his Sufferings; and that Bloud he shed upon the Cross it is the Fountain, 'tis the Ocean of all

Grace:

Grace : And if temptations storm thee, lay hold on that Crofs, it is the Anchor of Salvation thou haft hold on ; tell thy God although thou art not able to refift and ftand, thou haft the price of ftrength, that which did purchafe it was paid down for thee on the Crofs, and is at his right hand, he hath it : give me therefore grace for it, let me have the value of that Blood, the *Blood of God* in fpiritual fuccours, which may make me able to refift thy Enemies, and do thy will. Now God will never be unjuft to deny any man thofe aids that were fo dearly purchas'd for him, and for which he hath receiv'd the price.

And then that men fhould be Enemies of the Crofs which is their Magazine of ftrength againft their Enemies ! As men that do refift the having Grace, left it fhould change their inclinations ! as men that will not be impower'd againft Vice, but will oppofe the Aids of Heaven, fight againft the fuccours that are given them, and deftroy their own forces, left with them they fhould be able to encounter fin and overcome it ! Thus wilfully to run againft and charge their Anchor of Salvation ; to poifon to themfelves the Fountain the whole Ocean of their graces, is the ftate of them onely that do refolve and that had rather perifh.

Once more, on that Crofs was wrought a *reconciliation betwixt God and Man* ; and that upon fuch terms of honour to us Men, that God does feem to condefcend as far in this his Treaty, as in coming down from Godhead into Flefh ; there is Exinanition in his yieldings and compliance. He fent his Son to move us to be reconciled, as if he did acknowledg us the offended party ; and as if he meant to give us fatisfaction, in his Blood, he dies upon the Crofs to effect that Reconciliation. When our Saviour would magnifie a Love he thus expreffes it, *Greater love than this hath no man, that a man lay down his life for his friend* : But behold here is greater love, for *Chrift commended his love to us in that when we were Enemies he died for us*, only out of hopes to make us friends ; *Love ftong as death* indeed, that brought him to the Grave who could not die. *Σαλνεὶς ὡς Ἄδης Ἔλκος*, affection violent as Hell, that brought God to *Ἄδης*, and made him *descend to Hell* : For fo low he ftoop'd ; thus he humbled himfelf to perfuade us to be reconcil'd, and to prevail with us to be at peace with God.

And is a Reconciliation with the Lord fo hateful to us, that we will be Enemies to the Crofs that works it ? are we fo affur'd of worfting God Almighty, that we will refift whatever makes towards a peace with him ? are the Sinners expectations fo tempting ? do we look for fuch advantage from the *Covenant we have made with Death*, and the *agreement we are at with Hell*, that we will have the League defensive and offensive ? will be foes to their foes ? and will have War with God becaufe he is their Enemy ? are we thus resolv'd to be reveng'd upon the Triumphs of the Crofs ? and becaufe our Saviour *spoiled Principalities and Powers, triumphing over them on it* ; therefore fet our felves againft that Trophee of his Victories over our friends the Devil and his Fiends ? is the love of Chrift fo injurious to us that we will be Enemies to the Exprefles of it : and when his affection threw him down fo low for our fakes, humbled him to Hell to beg and to procure our friendship, will we go to trample on him there rather than not go thither, and rather than we will not be for ever there ?

Was

John xv. 13.
Rom. v. 8, 10.

Cant. viii. 6.
Ibid. 70.

Col. ii. 15.

Was it not for this! O blessed Saviour, that thou didst pray against thy Cup so earnestly, because of Man's ingrateful enmity to it? because thou wast to suffer God Almighty's Indignation in it, and the Sinners hatred for it? because it was the Cup of the Lords fury, and Man's also? God squeezed into it all the dregs of his Wrath, and then scornfully spits into it? and when the one will make thee drink it up, the other throws it in thy face? was it not because thou wert to take a Cross up which thou couldst not bear the Torments of, and man will not endure the blessings of? but most despitefully treads down that Cross while thou art sinking under it laden with their weight? this is, alas, a state so sad that neither *S. Paul's tears*, nor *Christ's blood* hath sufficient compassion for.

And yet though one *wept* the other *died* for them, these men have neither tears nor pity for themselves. Yet one would think this were a subject worthy of them: 'Tis storied of *Xerxes*, that when he took a view of his vast Army which he went to Conquer Greece with (an Army such as the Sun never saw, and it could scarce see that, which the Historian says did *Cælo minitari tenbras*, as it cover'd and drank up the Sea, and took up and devour'd the Earth, so it did seem to darken Heaven too: An Army which consisted, saith *Herodotus*, when muster'd at *Thermopyla*, of Five Millions, Two Hundred Eighty Three Thousand, Two Hundred and Twenty Men, besides Laundresses, Harlots, and Horses; and it had Twelve Hundred Gallies for Sea-fight, besides Twenty Hundred Ships for carriage.) When upon this view he had for a while gloried in his happinels to behold and Command so many Nations, and so Powerful a Fleet and Army: notwithstanding on a sudden he burst into tears on this Consideration, that in one Hundred years there should not one survive of that great marvellous multitude: (And truly through his folly in one hundred weeks scarce any one but was the prey of Enemies, and Death and Infamy.) But 'tis a sadder Contemplation to reflect on the far greater Army of the Enemies of the Cross, who, if they do not end that quarrel, will in fewer years be all dead and in Hell. I know not whether such a sad reflection called out *S. Paul's tears*, but sure I am it does deserve their own: And there is nothing will avail in their behalf without their tears. It may be tears are piteous things for such brave Sinners: But then what will these insulting Enemies of the Cross do, when they shall see *that Sign of the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven*? When this Cross shall usher in the great Assize? When they shall look on him that they have pierced and Crucified upon it? And when that Crucified offended Enemy shall come there to be their Judge? That takes himself to be offended much more in his kindness, than his Person; and will judge this more severely that we would not let his Cross and Passion do us any good, than that we Crucified him on it.

Let us then be caution'd in the fear of God to be no longer Enemies to that which is to reconcile our judge to us. If we have his Friendship on the Crofs, we may be sure to have it on the judgment Seat. He that on the Crofs parted with Godhead and with Life for us, will on the Bench adjudge us that Inheritance which his Crofs did purchase for us. He sits there to pronounce happiness upon all faithful sincere Christians, to proclaim *Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.*

To which, &c.

S E R M.

SERMON XV.

WHITE-HALL.

Novemb. 15. 1668.

MARK X. 15.

Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the
 Kingdom of God as a little Child, he shall not
 enter therein.

THE Kingdom of God, especially as it is concerns the fore-
 part of the Text, signifies nothing else but that of the
 Messiah, or in one word, Christianity; and that both as to
 the profession and the practise, the Doctrine and the life
 of it: For so the *whopy* *18.*, by which *Theophylact* expounds the words,
 the Preaching of the Doctrine is it self called the Kingdom of God by
 our Saviour, *Mat. 21. 43.* 'Tis not delivering of a message onely in
 weak empty words; 'tis Jurisdiction and exercise of Sovereignty:
 And the Commission that authoriz'd to it was the delegation of the
 Powers of Omnipotence: *All Power*, saith our Lord, *is given to* *Mat. 28. 18,*
me both in Heaven and in Earth, And (which the *Syriack* adds in that
 place also) *as my Father sent me, so send I you, go ye therefore and* *19.*
teach all Nations, teaching them to observe whatsoever I have Commanded *Joh. 20. 21.*
you. As if this were execution of the greatest and most Kingly Power,
 and every Doctrine had the force of Proclamation, every denunciation
 were Sentence; as it will be certainly to them that do not give obe-
 dience to it.

Which obedience is Secondly, and that most properly entitled the
 Kingdom of God; *Rom. 14. 17.* for by that he Reigns; without this
 our great universal Lord were a Prince of no Subjects, had a Kingdom
 but of Rebels onely: So that to receive the Kingdom of God is by the
 obedience of Faith to submit to the Gospel, to receive the Doctrines
 of it by believing; and the Precepts by obeying them: The duty
 which our Saviour here directs, and which with such severity he
 threatens non-performance of; even with exclusion from that blessed
 Immortality of Joies which the Kingdom of God imports, which is
 that sense it bears in the last words of my Text. In which we must
 consider,

C c 2

First,

First, the Object both of the Duty and the Threat a *Kingdom*, and that *the Kingdom of God*.

Secondly, our concern and duty in relation to that Kingdom we have onely *to receive it*. *Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God*.

Whatever buſtle men are well content to make to get poſſeſſion of any Earthly Dignity or Power, ſometimes to wage War with their Conſcience and all obligations, violate all Rights both Humane and Divine, and aſſault greateſt difficulties and yet greater guilt, to invade mens Crowns, and other rights, there's no ſuch need in this; we have no more to do but *let this Kingdom come*, and not reſiſt the having it. For therefore alſo,

Thirdly, the manner we are by our Saviour here preſcribed to receive this Kingdom in is, *as a little Child*. *Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little Child*, as one that cannot ſtand againſt the power of a Kingdom when it comes; that hath not ſtrength nor malice, neither force nor will to oppoſe; which they that do muſt needs keep themſelves out of it: Which is,

Fourthly, the thing threatned, *they shall not enter therein*; there being neither reaſon, nor indeed a poſſibility men ſhould poſſeſs that which they will not receive.

Laſtly, Chriſt's aſſeveration is added to all this, *Verily I ſay unto you whoſoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little Child, he shall not enter therein*.

But becauſe the main thing Chriſt intended in the Text (which he ſo oft repeated upon ſeveral occaſions) was by the ſignificative emblem of a *little Child*, viſibly to inform us of ſome diſpoſitions that are abſolutely neceſſary to the entertaining Chriſtianity, either in our minds by Faith, or in our lives by practice; I ſhall therefore wholly attend that deſign of his in the words, and handle them particularly as they ſeem here to be ſpoken in relation to the Doctrin of it. This being moſt of uſe now in an Age when men not only tear Religion with diſputes, but aim to baſtle it with reproaches quite out of the World: Now againſt ſuch the Text is poſitive, *Whoſoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God, the Doctrine of Chriſtianity as a little Child, he cannot enter therein*, neither into the poſſeſſion of the Promiſes of Chriſtianity, nor indeed into the profeſſion of it.

And here I need not labour much to find that in a Child which Chriſt requires of thoſe that come to be Diſciples in Religion; for it is plain that Children being impotent, unable to ſuſtain or to direct themſelves, they give themſelves up to the aids and the directions of others, thoſe eſpecially whom they are committed to, and with whoſe cares of them they are acquainted; to whoſe guidance they reſign themſelves entirely, laying hold on them in any dangerous appearance, and not truſting to themſelves at all: And when their Age firſt makes them capable of having any thing infus'd into them, being empty and unſeaſon'd Veſſels they will eaſily receive all and ſincerely without taint: And being neither fill'd before-hand with prejudicate opinions, nor with windy vain conceits of their own ſkill or knowledge, they muſt needs take in without any let or hindrance whatever is infus'd, and ſubmit themſelves to be directed wholly by

by their teachers, without contradiction or dispute, for they Judge not, nor examin, but receive. Now such a resignation seems the proper disposition which our Saviour expects in a Disciple. It is plain that his pretended Vicar and that Church expect it, that men shall submit their Faith entirely to the Church, believe whatever she proposeth as reveal'd by God merely on that account as she proposeth it, for otherwise it is not a right faith: Yea she requires that men give their assent to the determinations of her head, the Pope, in matters of fact also, where they are as competent to Judge as he; and though with all their industry, and using the same means, they cannot find the fact to be as he determines, yet they are oblig'd in conscience to that superior to depart from their own Judgment, and to yield and give their assent to his determinations. Witness the matter of *Jansenius*. Yea their great Cardinal is positive that 'If the Pope could err so far as to call evil good, good evil, to prohibit virtues or command vices, the Church were bound in conscience to believe those vices good and honest, and those virtues evil. So far he.

Indeed if that Church be the *Mother and Nurse of all Christians*, 'tis from her breasts only they must seek the *sincere Milk of the word*: Now that she is so, they must take her word, as Children do their Parents words that they are so. And indeed this is properly to receive the Doctrine as a *little Child*, not judge, nor reason, nor examin, but believe it. And such *legendary doctrines* as well as *Histories*, which they deliver are most fit to be receiv'd by such as Children. Yet as if this had been the proper method among Christians always, in *S. Austin's* time we find the *Manichees* derided Christianity, that discipline of Faith because by that men were commanded to believe and were not taught how to distinguish truth from falsehood by clear reason, and again, that it requires us to assent before we have a reason for it. And long before that *Celsus* did advise the Christians to receive no doctrines but on the account of reason, credulity being the inlet to deceit, saying, they that without grounds believe, are like those that admire and are satisfied with jugglers, and take appearances and sleight of hand for truth, adding many of the Christians, neither would receive, nor give a reason of their faith but us'd to say *πῶς ἔστιν ἡ πίστις ὅτι οὕτως ἐστίν*, do not you examin, but believe, 'tis your faith shall save you; and as if from the beginning it were so we cannot but have heard the story of that man that reading *Genesis* where *Moses* lays, *In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth*. And he said let there be light and there was light, &c. Swore at him, saying, *this Barbarian only asserted boldly but prov'd nothing*. As if Argument and Reason never had place in the Jewish or the Christian Religion, only those who were the instructors of each Religion, did deliver it; others had no more to do but to believe it, that is, to receive it as a *little Child*.

Whether these reproaches, and the Oath of these known enemies may go for proofs that it was so, I shall not now enquire. But it is certain on the other side *S. Paul* requires of his new Christian *Corinthians*, that they be not *Children in understanding*, that they be in *malice Children*, but in *understanding Men*. Now a Man and a Child differ not in this, that the one hath an understanding reasonable soul, and the other hath not; but in that the one cannot use his understanding

Si Papa erraret precipiendo vitia, vel prohibendo virtutes, teneretur Ecclesia credere vitia esse bona, virtutes malas, nisi vellet contra conscientiam peccare. Bellarm. de Rom. Pontif. l. 4. c. 5. ult. ultima.

Irridere Catholicam Fidei disciplinam, quod jubentur homines credere, non autem quid esset verum certissima ratione docerentur. l. 1. Reira. c. 14.

De util. cred. c. 1. ante Fidem nobis quam rationem imperari.

Origen. adv. Celsum. l. 1 p. 8. editio Cambrig. C. 1.

1 Cor. 14. 20.

standing or his reason, and the other where he acts as man does: So that our Religion in requiring that we *be in understanding men*, does require of us that we use our reason in it.

And since assenting to a thing as truth is an Act of the highest faculty of the soul of man as it is properly and truly reasonable, namely as it *understands and judges*, it is not possible a man should really believe a thing unless he satisfy himself that he hath reason for so doing. Yea, whether that be true or not which many men so eagerly contend for, that the will though free is bound, and cannot choose but will that which appears best at that time it wills, yet it is sure that he who with his understanding, which is not free in her apprehensions and judgments, but must necessarily embrace that which hath most evidence of truth: He I say who really assents to any proposition does satisfy himself that he hath better and more cogent reasons for that than the contrary: And therefore it is impossible that any man can verily believe a thing which he is thoroughly convinc'd is contrary to clear and evident right reason, for he cannot have a better reason for the thing that is so; and were it possible for any man to believe so, there could be neither grounds nor Rules for such a ones belief; for there is nothing in the World, so false and so absurd although he were assur'd it were so, but he might assent to it, for whatever demonstrations could be offer'd why he should not, yet it seems he might believe against acknowledg'd evident truth and reason, but this were only *wish*, or *fancy and imagination*, not *belief*. And to prevent such Childish weak credulity was the great work and care of Christ, so far is he from requiring we should be *as Children* in this kind. For *when he was ascended up to heaven he gave some Apostles, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers*, he shed down the Holy Spirit and his gifts, *that we might not be as Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine*; Eph. 4. 14.

First, For want of rational grounds instable in our Faith as Children are in body, and in judgment also, taking all appearances for truths. If men were only to believe, there must needs be as great variety of Religions as of teachers. And though God hath appointed that some Church should be as perfectly *infallible* as that of *Rome* pretends to be; yet since there are so many Churches, and the true one therefore could be known no otherwise then by some marks, there must be disquisition before Faith; and men must reason and examine ere they can believe upon good grounds; for were they to receive Religion *as a little Child*, be nurst up with the *Doctrine* as with *milk*, a Child we know may suck infection from the poyson'd breast of an unwholesom mother, or some other person, for it knows not to distinguish; and so may be nurst to death. A soul like theirs that is but *rasa tabula*, white paper, is as fitted to receive the *mark of the beast*, as the *inscription of the living God*, just as the first hand shall impress. Therefore we are bid ^h *not to believe every Spirit*, not every Teacher though he come with gifts, pretend and seem to be inspir'd, *but try them*; and our ⁱ *Saviour forewarn'd the Jews of false Christs that should come with signs and wonders*. Something therefore must be known first and secur'd, before the understanding can be thus oblig'd to give up its assent; and ^a *Captivate every thought into obedience*, as

^h 1 Joh. 4. 1.

ⁱ Mat. 24. 24.

^a 2 Cor. 10. 5.

S. Paul directs. Now what that was here to the hearers in the Text is easily collected, namely that *he was the Christ that does require it*: And S. Paul expresses it in the forecited place; where he says *we must bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*, to wit, of that Christ, who as he does himself profess that *if he had not done among them the works which no other had done, they had not had sin*: John. 15. 24. If his demonstrations had not convinc'd them it had been no fault not to believe: So when he had made appear he was that person whom their prophecies had pointed out, the *Messiah, the Son of the living God*, and this not only his ^b Disciples had acknowledg'd, but the ^c multi-^b Mat. 16. 16. tudes; yea, when his miracles had made one of the Pharisees confess, ^c John 6. 14. ^d Rabbi we know thou art a Teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles, except God be with him. Then if the ^e Pharisees dispute against his Doctrine of Divorce, urge the authority of Moses and Gods Law; and the ^f Disciples press the inconveniences that will happen, *If the case of Man be such with his wife*; he may answer them: He that will not receive my Doctrines without dispute, that is to say, *He that will not receive the Kingdom of God as a little Child shall not enter therein*. ^g This King that cometh in the name of the Lord ^h Luke 19. 38. may well determin how we shall receive the Kingdom of God. If he propose strange precepts to our practise, it appears that he is sent from God, and Gods commands are not to be disputed but obey'd; if his revelations present dark unintelligible Mysteries to our faith, his promises offer seeming impossibilities to our hope, why yet he hath made proof he comes from God; and surely we are not so insent as to doubt that God can discover thing above our understanding, and do things above the comprehension of our reason. Therefore since we are as Children to all these, it is but just we should receive them even as little Children: With a perfect resignation of our understandings and of our whole souls. Here 'tis most true what S. Austin says, ⁱ Those are not ^j De milit. Christians who deny that Christ is to be believ'd, unless there be some other cer- cred. c. 14. tain reason of the thing besides his saying, *Si Christo etiam credendum negant nisi indubitata ratio reddita fuerit Christiani non sunt*. For to them that are convinc't of that, 'tis such a reason that he is the Christ.

There is indeed no other name now under heaven, to whom we are oblig'd to give such deference, for however the modern Doctrines dare assert, that *Christ hath given the very same infallibility which himself had to all S. Peters successors as often as they speak ex Cathedra*; and that in matters both of right and of particular fact; yet not to countenance this monster by admitting combat with it, nor to put my self into the circle which these men commit who talk of the *Authority of the Church*, to which they require us to resign our Faith. I shall not stay to rack them on that their own wheel: This I dare affirm, it is impossible for any person or assembly to produce a delegation of authority in more ample terms then the great Council of the Jews could shew, sign'd both by God and Christ. According to the sentence of the Law which they shall teach thee, and according to the Judgment which they shall tell thee thou shalt do; thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand, nor to the left, saith God, Deut. 17. 11. compar'd with 2 Chron. 19. 8, 9, 10, 11. And our Saviour says, *They sit in Moses Chair, all therefore whatsoever they*

ⁱ Maimonid.
Tad. Shagagob.
c. 12. 13. V.
More Nebochin
l. 3. c. 41. p. 465.
Or see, Ainf-
worth upon that
place of Levi-
ticus.

they bid you observe, that observe and do, Mat. 23. 2. Let them of Rome produce you a better and more large commission. Yet did not this suppose that Council was infallible either in the interpreting the Law, or in attesting of tradition, or in judging of a Prophet, or that the Jews were blindly to give up their assent and their obedience to their sentence; God did not mean the people should imagin that when he prescrib'd a *Sacrifice for expiation of their errors in their Judgment when they found it out. Lev. 4. 13.* As their own ⁱ Doctors do expound it: Therefore God suppos'd that they might err, and we know that their Traditions did *evacuate the Law. Mat. 23. 15.* They *judg'd and slew true Propbets, v. 37.* They declar'd *the Messiah an impostor, Mat. 27. 63. and blasphemous, and for that condemn'd him, Mat. 26. 65. and decreed what the Apostles told them they must not obey, A&T. 5. 25.*

But though there be no such Authority that's absolute, over the Faith of Men now upon Earth; yet if this *Jesus* did acquire such by his Works; if by the Miracles he wrought, his raising others from the Dead, his own Death and his Resurrection, he sufficiently justified the Divinity of his Doctrine: (And if those Miracles were true, they were no doubt sufficient) and if those that did pretend they were eye witnesses and ministers of all this, his Apostles and the Seventy Disciples, and those others that accompanied him, who conversed with him continually, and could not therefore be deceived if they profess they heard and saw all this; and Preacht it in the face of those that would have contradicted if they could, and rather than their lives have proved all false; yea *Preacht it everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following.* If they consign'd that Word in Writing also which they Preacht, to be a measure and a Standard of that Doctrine to futurity; which Word so Preacht and Written by agreeing, would in aftertimes give mutual illustrious evidence to one another; and if any *Heterodoxies* should at any time creep by degrees into the Articles or the external practice of the Church, they might be easily discovered by those Records.

And if the multitudes that heard, and saw, and did receive all this, and which were grown extremely numerous almost in every Nation of the then known World, while those Apostles and Disciples liv'd, if these deliver'd what they must needs know whether 'twere true or not, deliver'd both that Doctrine and those Books of it as most certain truth, by Preaching, and by Writing, and by Living to it, and by Dying for it, and engaging their Posterity to do so; and they also did that to all Ages; if all this, I say, be true, then it is easie to conclude that we are to receive the *Doctrine* of that *Jesus*, and *this Book* the Records of it, with the resignation of a little Child, and absolutely to submit our Faith to them.

But that it was thus; first as sure as any of us here, who have not seen the thing can be, that *Christianity is now profess'd; the Bible now received* in all the Regions round about us throughout *Europe*, or indeed that there are such Regions and places, so sure we may be, for we have the testimony of the World, that for example in the days of *Dioclesian* 'twas over the World profess'd both with their mouths and lives; owned in despite of Spoyl, of Torments, and of Death; and

and they did value the Records of this Doctrine so much dearer than their Lives or their Estates, that in prosecution of those ^m Edicts, wherein the *Christians were required to deliver up their Bibles to be burnt*, in one Month ⁿ 17000, were put to death: And the Persecution lasted at that rate for ten years time; so that in *Egypt* only it is said there were slain ^o 144000, and 70000 banisht. (*The Laity it seems were allowed Bibles then.*) Or put the case higher in *Adrian's*, or *Trajan's* time, who both lived within an ^p Hundred years of *Christ*, who Martyr'd them 'till weariness slackned the Execution, and they gave off onely as it were that so they might cease to persecute themselves; and we have the ^q Officers engaged attesting this, all which must needs be as notorious as the Light.

Now Secondly, 'tis most impossible those so vast multitudes of every Nation should have met together, forg'd a Code of Doctrines, and agreed so uniformly in professing a Religion, and in dying for it; for we may as easily believe that there were never any men before this Age we live in but that these began the kind, as that those of that Age began the Christian Religion.

Thirdly, 'tis as impossible that their immediate Ancestors who lived in the Apostles Age, who heard their Preaching, received their Writings, saw the Miracles they did, if they did any, and many of them must have seen Christ also after he was risen if it were so; yea multitudes of them were themselves parties in the gifts of Tongues and Miracles, if there were any, and so could not be impos'd on, but must necessarily know whether they were truths or forgeries: It is as Impossible, I say, so many should agree together to betray all their Posterity into the profession of a Religion from which they could look for no advantage but the certain total Ruin of themselves and their posterity; it was not possible they could have done this if they had not thought all this was true; and since they did know whether it were true or not, if they thought it was true, they did know it was, and if they knew it was, then it is certain that it was so; and these Scriptures, and the Doctrines Christians deliver (so far as they have not varied since that time from these Authentical Records) they have the *Seal of God*, Miracles to attest they come from God.

I might have urged completion of Prophecies to prove the same. First those in the *Old Testament* of the *Messiah*, which so eminently came to pass in *Christ*, that they sufficiently clear those Books to be Divine: Next *Christ's* predictions in the New, particularly those about *Jerusalem*, which saith *Eusebius* ^r *He that will compare with what Josephus an eye-witness and no Christian, writes of it* (or what our selves know of that Nation and that place indeed) *he must acknowledge the Divinity of his words.* But enough hath been said to prove they come from God, and therefore we must so receive them as the *Word of God*, with perfect resignation of our Souls, and submission of our judgments, denying every apprehension that would start aside from and not captivate it self to that prime truth which cannot be deceived nor lye; and renounce all discourses Reason offers that resist such abnegation of it self and all our other faculties, that is, *receive this word of the Kingdom as a little Child.*

^m vid. *Enf. b.*
l. 8. c. 3.

ⁿ vid. *Baron.*
Annal. ad an-
num. 302. num.

22. & 26.

^o *Spondanus ad*
annum 302.

num. 4. Severus
l. 2. *bist ait;*

Omnis feni sacro
martyrum cru-
ore orbis infelua

est.

^p *There were*
but seven years

betwixt the
death of S. Joh.

and the perse-
cution of Tra-

jan, some say
but one.

^q *Plinius. Pro-*
con. Pontii. &
Byb. hia. vid.

ipius Ep. l. 10.
Ep. 97. Tertul.

Apol. Euseb.
ecc. bist. l. 3.

c. 33.

^r *Euseb. lib. 3.*
c. 7. Hist. Eccle.

I do not here affirm, by saying this, that our Religion does disdain, or keep at distance from the service of any of Mans faculties, for it sometimes admits them not as Ministers only, but as Judges: 'Tis plain the senses were the first, I do not say conveyance onely, but, Foundation of Faith, which was built on the first believers eyes and ears; they heard the Doctrine, saw the Miracles, were sure they saw and heard them, and so, supposing the signs sufficient to confirm the Doctrine to have come from God, were certain of their truth, without any Authority of a Church to influence that faith into divine: And S. John therefore does not onely call in, and admit, and urge their testimony, *That which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have lookt upon, and our hands have handled of the word of Life, that declare we unto you*; But our Saviour in the highest point of Faith appeals directly to their Judgment: *Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing*: And S. Austin also gives them the decision of a point of Doctrine which of all others now troubles the Church most; for speaking of the Eucharist, he says, *that which you see is Bread, and 'tis a Cup, it is that very thing which your eyes tell you 'tis*. *Tertullian also long before that had appealed to them in that very cause. And in an instance where their sentence passes, 'tis not strange if Reason also take the Chair, and do pretend to Judge. And truly when the Scripture that does call those Elements *Christs Body and his Blood*, does also call them after Consecration *Bread and Wine*; and since they must be called one of them by a figure, for they cannot be in Substance both; and since that Scripture hath not told us where the Figure lies, hath not expressly said, 'tis this but in resemblance, that in Substance: Here if Reason that hath Principles by which to judge of Bodies, which are expos'd to all the notices and trials of our several faculties, and to which a Trope is not a stranger, it can judge of figurative speeches; when it therefore finds if it admit the figure in that form *This is my Body*, 'Tis but just the same which was in the Jews Sacrament the *Paschal Lamb*: which they call'd the *Body of the Passover* though it were but the memorial, a figure which was always usual in Sacraments, and is indeed essential to Sacraments: And which is used in all things that are given by exhibitiv signs. But if it should resolve it to be *Bread and Wine* onely in a figure, besides a most impossible acknowledged Consequence, that a man can be nourisht by them, which the *Romanists* dare not deny; nor yet dare grant that men can feed upon a trope, be nourish'd with a figure; besides this, if reason shall resolve that, it must judge against all Rules it hath of judging by, and judge in contradiction to known Principles, and trample on all Laws of sense and understanding, which (especially when the Scripture hath no where defined expressly) must be most unreasonable; yea most impossible, to judge that true (that is to say, believe that thing) which it sees is most irreconcilable with known truths. Here therefore Reason is not insolent if it give verdict by its proper evidences; men are not bound to swallow contradictions as they do the *Wafer*, or receive as a little Child, that discerns the *Lords Body*, no more then it does the repugnancies that are consequent to their Hypothesis concerning it.

¹ 1 Joh. 1. 1, 2.

¹ Joh. 20. 27.

¹ Quod ergo videtur panis est, & calix quod vobis etiam oculi vestri nuntiavit. Aug. serm. ad Infantes.

¹ Tertul. de Anima. c. 17.

¹ Mat. 26. 29.

¹ 1 Cor. 11. 26. 27.

נֶפֶשׁ פֶּסַח
Talm. Baby.
tin. Pesachim. c.
10. sec. 3. Mai-
mon. Yad, titulo
חֶמֶץ וּמֵצָה
c. 8. sec. 7.

Or to make another instance, when the Scripture says, *God is a Spirit*, yet does also give him *hands*, and *eyes*, and *ears*, and *wings*, and these of strange prodigious dimensions; neither tells us which of these is *proper* and which *figure*: Here if Reason that can prove God cannot be a Body, and cannot endure his God should be a monster, shall be called in to pass sentence; they that make Philosophy interpret Holy Writ in this case, and give the last resort to Reason, do no more usurp or trespass on Religion, then they that make use of Authors, or a Dictionary judge of the sense of any *Greek* or *Hebrew* word in Scripture.

But notwithstanding this we may not think the mysteries of Faith are to be measured by the Rules of natural Reason, so to stand or fall as they approve themselves to its discourse or Principles: for though it be impossible that any Revelation can contradict right Reason (truth cannot be inconsistent with truth:) yet it is very possible God can reveal those truths which we have neither faculties analogal, nor Principles or notions proportioned to, nor any natural ways of judging or examining. And if those faculties which are not capable of cognisance will judge; and judge of things removed from all our notices; (such as Spiritual, Infinite, Eternal being is) and do it by principles gathered from the information of our Sences, and by analogy with things of another kind; corporeal finite things that are about us; reason need not be informed how liable such judgments must be to mistakes; and how that which we call repugnancy in one may have no place in the other. Here therefore to submit our understandings, and believe is but modest justice, and to receive as Children what our Heavenly Father says.

And therefore they that will presume to comprehend what ere they are commanded to believe, and those that will believe nothing but what they are able to comprehend, are alike insolent, if not pernicious. 'Tis true God by the Gospel hath revealed and brought to light many things which before appeared onely as he himself did in the Temple, in a Cloud; namely concerning the *Divine nature*, *Persons*, *Properties*, and the *Eternal being*, and the *Incarnation of his Son*; but still, as God himself is said to do, these also dwell in Light, that no man can approach unto. Which he that will needs gaze and pry too near to, must be dazled into blindness, and be only so much more in the dark. But he that proudly does conceit his little spark of Reason can bear up with that Divinity of brightness, and enlighten him to look through all those inaccessible discoveries, with *Lucifers* assuming he hath reason to expect his fall. The one of these that will needs clear all mysteries, the other will take them all away; the one that with his Pencil will presume to figure him who is the brightness of Gods glory, and trace out the lineaments by which that everlasting Father did impress the character, and express Image of his person on him, and the other that with a bold hand dashes out the Person from the Nature; the one that will untie the knots of the Hypostatick union; and the other that will cut them and the union too asunder; the one that will needs prove by Reason whatsoever is in Scripture, and the other that speaking of Christs Satisfaction, saith 'for my part if it were not onely once but oftentimes set down in holy Scripture, yet would not I therefore believe it, because forsooth it was against

^a The School-man.

^b The Socinian.

^c Ego quidem etiam non semel, sed saepe id in sacris monumentis scriptum extaret, non idcirco tamen ita prosum se habere crediderem. Socinus, de Servatore. l. 3. c. 6. 2^o Vol.

his reasonings: Neither the one or other of these sure receive revelation as a little Child, not like young Samuel, Speak Lord for thy Servant heareth.

But these, as all extravagance is wont, are profited into much worse: The one that would be proving, making reasons for, the mysteries, often God knows framed only shadows, and the other by their light of Reason being able to dispel and make those shadows vanish, that so easie victory encouraged them to frame reasons against, and to attaque the mysteries themselves; and then others finding there was something that was taken to be reason not agreeing with some chief heads of Religion, as they had been still received; took occasion thence to conclude against the whole Religion; and by scruples at some Articles taught themselves to dispute all the Creed; and now a difficulty in one Doctrine makes the rest suspected, and regarded onely as things made to amuse, and the unusual wording of a Command is thought ground enough to turn all Christian duty into Raillery.

For instance; If Christ intending by prescribing patience, to teach men how to escape not onely from the guilt, and present torture that a Spirit which will needs return each sleight offence is subject to, but also from the future and eternal recompences of revenge, shall in phrasing his injunctions but bid them ^d *turn the other cheek*, no Gentleman can be of his Religion; and that is cause enough I hope not only to renounce, but scorn it. If in meer compassion meaning only to make virtue easie, by advising us against the snares and the occasions of Vice, he word his Counsel in prescriptions to ^e *pull out the right eye, cut off the right hand*: His Religion is a much worse Tyranny then the Covenant ^f *Nabash* offered to the men of *Jabesh Gilead*, and they think themselves as much concern'd to make parties against it: In fine, if that he might at once instruct us how to pull up ^g *the root of all evil*, he forbid us ^h *to lay up treasures upon the Earth*, and tell us *that our treasures should be laid up in Heaven*, and say it is ⁱ *impossible for a rich man to enter into Heaven*; here they cry out mainly he supposeth us, and treats us just as Children: This Command requires indeed that they who do receive it should be Children, whom we use to cheat of gold by the same methods, telling them it is not good for them at present that it shall be laid up for them; and therefore when Religion does attempt to deal with men so, 'tis concluded it designs to cozen them, as they think it does indeed, and is a cheat, and all that minister about it are meer fourbes: And truly if we rackt the Consciences of dying men; and if so be they would give so much to this Cloyster or that Order promised them remission of their sins, and worse than *Judas*, sold the purchase of Christs Blood at those base rates, and betrayed the Redemption so, on Gods name let them so account us; but if we do attempt on nothing but mens vices, and would onely steal their Souls from Hell, and cheat them into piety and blessedness, these we hope are very unareproachful frauds. But alas! to talk to them of these after-things, of Heaven and Hell is altogether as much liable to their contempt as the commands are. If we tell them of a Resurrection to Judgment, and of everlasting fire to punish wicked men, because their reason cannot

^d Mat. 5. 39.

^e Mat. 5. 29, 30

^f And the men of *Jabesh Gilead* said unto *Nabash*, make a covenant with us and we will serve thee. And *Nabash* answered them, on this condition will I make a Covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel.

^g 1 Sam. 11. 1, 2.

^h 1 Tim. 6. 10.

ⁱ Mat. 6. 19, 20

^j Mat. 19. 24,

26.

com-

comprehend how flame can hurt a Soul; or for the Body how devouring fire can repair the food it preys upon, that it may keep alive and nourish torment to eternity; or how each man's peculiar dust that is digested into several mens being and so become no one mans peculiar, when it shall be also blended with the ashes of the Universe, can be singled out and parted to its proper owner, when there are so many own it, because their reason cannot comprehend all this, therefore *Scriptures lake of fire* must be no more then the *Poets Acheron*; and Resurrection was fram'd (as the apparition of a Ghost is wont to do) to fright men meerly; and however 'tis attested Christ did never rise, but all is fable: Thus from such premises as these our rational disputing men conclude.

And here I shall not ask how these men dare presume, that if there be a God who hath declar'd that he will bring such things to pass, yet he must be unable to affect them, if they cannot comprehend the manner how he does them; or be confident they can look through those *beams that come out of his hand, in which the hiding of his Power is*: But this I shall say to our men of reason, theirs is the most unreasonable way of arguing in the world; to dispute against plain matters of fact, the *being and the Works of such and such so many ages since*, and witnessed by a greater testimony then the World can shew for any other thing; and ever since appearing in their visible and vast effects, *as the Conversion, Suffering, Faith, of the whole Earth almost*. Now to attempt the confutation of such matter of fact by reasonings drawn from difficulties in some things which those men are witnessed to have deliver'd, or to conclude, that there can never have been any such persons in the World, because they cannot understand all that those persons taught, or possibly because they can take some occasions to burlesque on what they taught, is most ridiculous. Thus History must have been false, and several known places not to have been; because the story hath been turn'd into *Burlesque*: Thus he that with the Ancients cannot comprehend how it is possible that there should be *Antipodes*, or the Earth can be any thing but a plain flat, otherwise he thinks the inhabitants must fall down to Heaven; may as rationally despise all the discoveries of the Earth, assure himself our constant Navigations which perswade us 'tis a Globe inhabited on both sides, bring home from the *Indies* nothing else but false relations, and that indeed there are no *Indies*.

I need not urge how Christianity approves it self even to the reasoning of the sober part of mankind; and the morality of it had the suffrage of the World before it self appeared: For while the evidence stands good, if the matter of fact be true, the Doctrine must be true, and the commands obey'd: and to use such arguings to refell such matter of fact is just like that which *Zeno* did attempt, namely, by subtilties to prove it was impossible there could be any motion, while another did disturb his Lecture by his motion up and down the Schools; it is the same thing as to take a *bowl to cut with*, or the *vessels of the Danaids to carry water in*: For such reasonings are alike improper for that work.

And

Mat. XIV. 20.
21.

John II. 6. 7.

^a Exod. VII.

11, 13, 22.

^b Exod. VIII.

19.

^c Exod. IX. 11.

^d Mat. 24. 29.

And indeed these arguings are not the exceptions of reason, but the strugglings of mens vices against Religion. And it must be impossible so many Thousands would give up their *Bodies*, rather than their *Bibles* to the fire in *Dioclesian's* days, because it is a book which they can find no other pleasure in but that of railing it, or helping them with subjects to be prophane upon. It must be false that *Christ* did feed 5000 with 5 loaves and 2 small fishes, 'till 12 baskets full of broken pieces did remain; yet not so much because they know not how their eating could nourish the victuals so, and make it grow; as because they are angry with the worker of the miracle, who forbids and upbraids the excesses of their luxury, which can easily, and does daily consume the price of that that would suffice 5000, without miracle on 5 single persons; and all that when 'tis drest according to the modern mode of eating well, dissolved, turned into juyces, and exalted into the Elixir of the Epicure, shall leave, alas! no broken pieces for the Alms-basket: This is the quarrel; this does make the miracle impossible. And yet methinks upon the same account they should allow, that at a feast he turned so many pots of water into wine, because that seems to gratifie the thirsts of their intemperance. In fine, we do not live as men prepared or willing to be called to an account of all our doings, therefore we have no mind to rise again to give it: When we are thus minded, it is not hard to meet with difficulties that encourage the opinion that we shall not rise. Which difficulties when we look into, we cannot find how it is possible we can be raised, and 'tis easie then to think we cannot, that it is impossible, especially when it is our will and interest to think so; and then it must be false whatever is in Scripture that we shall. These are the processes of those that reason against Christianity, such the grounds that they dispute upon: But their reasons are but Sophisms of lust and interest, which will guild and paint whatever they are much in love with, and it is no wonder they find colours for it, and can think them reasons, for they always did so against present evident conviction. When *Moses* by his miracles endeavoured to let *Pharaoh* know who was the Lord, and to persuade him to let *Israel* go; while *God* permitted the ^a *Magicians* to counterfeit those miracles, it lookt like reasonable indeed that *Pharaoh* should not be convinced; but when they could not immitate, but did confess ^b the finger of the Lord, and ^c themselves suffered those plagues which they could not either conjure up or down; then if *Pharaoh* will not be persuaded, 'tis plain nothing but his interest, not the wonders which were brought by the *Magicians*, were the reasons that prevailed with him; for those were not reasons against more and greater miracles; yet they were effectual with him to the destruction of himself and his nation. Again when they who knew the mighty works *Christ* did, and were ^d forewarned by him of false *Christs* and false *Prophets*, that would come with signs and lying wonders; *God* allowing *Sathan* leave to struggle at his last gasp, and to make a blaze when he was to fall from heaven as lightning, but far beneath the glory of his only begotten Son: when they who knew both these, chose yet to follow a *Barchocab*, a false falling Meteor, who came indeed with greater shew, and not with such strict mortifying Doctrines, nor onely with the thin encouragement

ment of after-expectations as *Christ* did, for he gave them hopes of present temporal enjoyments; but he did no wonder besides *spitting fire* (S. Jerome says) and *throwing great stones from his knee as from an Engine*, say his followers; which yet could not scare the Souldiers, neither did the Roman Eagles (which were true-bred) fear those flames he spate, but destroyed some millions of them. Now 'tis evident by the comparison of the several signs that *Christ* and this *Barchocab* wrought, the onely reasons that gave efficacy to that sleight imposture, and did make it over-power *Christ's* mighty works, was their earthly desires and affections which *Christ's* severe Doctrines could not gratifie, and therefore they receiving not the love of the truth, but having pleasure in unrighteousness, gave themselves up to delusions to believe a lie; yet still those delusions went for reason with them. Once more *Tertullian* challenging the Heathen says, *Proince before your judgment-seats some, whom you will, of those who are inspired by any of your Gods, when gaping ore the Altar they have in its fumes (according to their custom) taken in the Deity 'till they are great with it, & ructando conantur, while they are in travel with him, as it were, have belching throws, that they burst almost 'till they are delivered of the inspiration: while it is thus, let but any Christian adjure them by the name of Christ, and if the spirits that they are possesst with do not presently confess that they are Devils, ibidem illius Christiani procacissimi sanguinem fundite, let the sawcy petulant Christian lose his life.* He speaks of this as a known frequent trial. And *Minutius Felix* says, their chiefeft Gods have been forced out of their Votaries, and acknowledged they were evil spirits. Now here was reason and experience; the miracle was so evident, that *Tertullian* bragging says, *do not believe it if your eyes and ears can suffer you*; and the reason was more pressing then the fact, *Nec enim Divinitas deputanda est quæ subdita est homini, is being most impossible that that should be a God which a man could rule and triumph over, so imperiously manage him, as with a bare command to force him from his hold, and make him shame himself so villainously before both his adorers and his enemies, as to say, He was a Devil.* Yet the Heathens still found colours to do out all this conviction; and their old acquaintance with their Gods, together with the Custom of their vicious Worshipps, had more force with them then miracle and reason. And while the Christian dispossesst their Deities, he was himself turned out of all his own possessions; and although he made their God confess himself a Devil, yet still poor he was made to suffer as a malefactor.

And 'tis not strange if men now stick as closely to their vices, as those did to the Gods that patronized them, and it be as hard to exorcise the Devil out of their affections and practices, as it was then out of Heathen Votaries or Temples. They are as fierce against the Christian Religion for their lusts sake, as those for their *Venus*, and the very same account that made those Heathen Customs, or the lying wonders of false Christs, or *Pharaoh's* Magicians signs, be more persuasive then the other more real miracles; namely, because they sided with their inclinations and interests. This very account makes little difficulties (which Almighty God hath left in our Religion, as he suffered signs and lying wonders heretofore, for trials) yea, makes cavils,

vid. Raimundi Martini, pag. fidei, p. 262.

ארבע מאות ונבנ

Four Millions, vide pag. fid. ibid.

2 Thef II. 10.

Tert. Apol. c. 23.

Edatur hic aliquis sub tribunalibus vestris ex iis quide Deo pati existimantur, qui arii in balantes numen de nilore concipiunt, qui ructando conantur, qui anbelando profantur; nisi se damones confessi fuerint, Christiano mentiri non audentes ibidem. &c.

cavils, mere exceptions, pass for reasons most invincible, be disputed, urg'd with great concern and passion, against all those methods of conviction which God hath afforded Christianity.

Now if this be to receive Religion as a little Child, 'tis with the forwardness of Children, when they are displeas'd or ill at ease; who resist and quarrel with the thing that is to make them well or please them, and return the Parents cares to ease and quiet them with little outrages and vexing. And do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee and established thee? Ask thy Father and he will shew thee, thy Elders and they will tell thee, Deut. 32. 6, 7. Now have Children any other way to know their Parents, then to let their Father shew them, and their Elders tell them? Or should we cast off the relation and renounce all the obedience due to it, because we are not sure of it our selves? For ought we know those may not be our Parents, we have only testimony for it: Thus we serve our God on that account; and yet Hath he not made thee and established thee? As he began us, so did he not nurse and bear us in his arms, and carry us in all our weakness and difficulties, 'till he brought us up to a full strength? 'Till by a miraculous and signal providence he had established, settled us? and after all these cares bestowed upon us, do we prove a generation of vipers only, such as do requite the bowels that did bear and nourish them, by preying on them and consuming them? Or like the offspring of a Spider, who, when he hath spent himself with weaving nets, and working of them into labyrinths, to be the granaries and the defences of his brood, to catch them prey, and to secure them; then the strongest of his young ones, when he is by these his cares established and grown ripe to destroy, makes those threads fatal to his parent, which he spun out of his bowels to be thread of life to him. And shall we be such Children to our Father that established us? Make all his plenties turn to poison in us, and inveneome us against himself? make his miraculous mercies furnish us for the abuse and provocation of him? His blest Providence serve only to afford us arguments against it self; help to confute it self because it hath so prospered, doth still suffer us? but after all this, is he not thy Father that hath bought thee? who to all his titles to us, his endearing obligations, notwithstanding our despites and provocations of them; yet did give the life of his own Son to purchase o're again the same relation to us, that we might have right to the inheritance of his Kingdom: And then however we have hitherto affronted, let us be content now to be bought and hir'd, to receive that Kingdom of God as his Children; for if Children then heirs; heirs of God, and joynt heirs with Christ, who died to make us Kings and Priests to God and his Father.

*Arist. Hist. Anim. l. 5. c. 27.
Plin. nat. hist. l. 11. c. 24.*

Rom. VIII. 7.

To whom be glory, &c.

A
S E R M O N

PREACH'D IN

St PETER'S WESTMINSTER

ON

SUNDAY, *January* VI. 1660.

AT THE

CONSECRATION

OF THE

Right Reverend *Fathers* in God,

GILBERT *Lord Bishop* of Bristol,

EDWARD *Lord Bishop* of Norwich,

NICHOLAS *Lord Bishop* of Hereford,

WILLIAM *Lord Bishop* of Gloucester.

By RICHARD ALLESTRY D. D.

Canon of Christ-Church in Oxford, and one
of His Majesties Chaplains.

L O N D O N:

Printed by John Playford, in the Year 1683.

SEPMON

TEACHED IN

ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH

ON

THE 11th DAY OF JULY 1860

AT THE

CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN

OF THE

DIocese of London

By the Rev. Canon

JOHN H. B. GOSWOLD

OF ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH

AND OF ST. MARTIN'S

CHURCH, LONDON

Printed by J. H. B. GOSWOLD

At the Press of the

Church of St. Martin

and of St. Martin's

Church, London



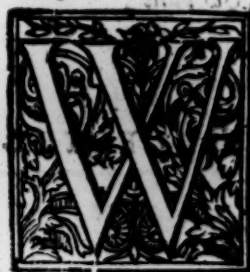
TO THE

Right Reverend Father in God,

GILBERT,

Lord Bishop of London, and Dean of
His Majesties Chappel Royal.

My LORD,



WHEN I consider with what
reluctancies I appear thus in
publick; I have all reason
to suspect and fear, lest this
offering, which like an *un-*
willing Sacrifice was dragg'd to
the *Altar*, and which hath great *defects* too, will
be far from *propitiating* either for *its self* or for
the *votary*. But I must crave leave to add, that
how averse soever I was to the *publishing* this
rude *Discourse*, I make the *Dedication* with
all possible *zeal*, and *ready cheerfulness*. For
I expect your *Lordship* to be a *Patron*, not
only to my *Sermon*, but to my *Subject*. Such
a separate eminence of *virtue* and of *sweet-*
ness mixt together may hope to ingratiate
Your *Function*, to a *Generation* of men that
will not yet know their own good, but

resist mercy, and are not content to be happy. And for *my self*, Your *Lordships* great goodness and obligingness hath encourag'd me, not only to hope that you will pardon all the miscarriages of what I now present, but also to presume to shelter it and *my self* under your *Lordships* Name and Command, and to honour my self before the World by this address, and by assuming the relation of

My Lord,

Your Lordships most humbly devoted

and most faithful Servant,

RICH. ALLESTRY.

SERMON XVI.

I N

ST PETERS WESTMINSTER.

January 6. 1660.

ACTS XIII. 2.

The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

AN D as they ministred to the Lord and fasted, the holy Ghost said, — Although that *ministring* to God by *prayer* and *fasting*, be the indicted and appropriate acts to preface such Solemnities as *this*; and that not *Sermons*, but *Litanies* and *intercessions*, are the peculiar adherents of *Embers*, and of *Consecrations*; and those vigorous strivings with Almighty God by Prayer are the *birth-pangs* in which *Fathers* are *born* unto the Church: Yet since that now this *Sacred Office* is it self oppos'd, and even the *Mission* of *Preachers* preach'd against, and the *Authority* that *sends* despis'd as *Antichristian*, whilst *separation* and *pretence* unto the *Holy Ghost* set up themselves against the strict injunction of the Holy Ghost *to separate*; the Pulpit that otherwhiles hath fought against it, must now atone its errours, by attending on the *Altar*, and the bold ungrounded claims of *Inspiration*, that false Teachers have usurp'd, be superseded by the voice of the *Holy Ghost* himself, who in this case becomes the *Preacher*, and says, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have call'd them.*

My Text is a *Commission parole* from Heaven, in it you have,

First, the Person that sends it out; τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον, *The Holy Ghost said.*

Secondly, the Persons to whom it is directed; imply'd in the verb ἀπορίσσετε *separate*, more particularly exprest in the foregoing words. Verse 1. 2.

Thirdly, the thing to which they were impowr'd by the Commission, or which was requir'd of them; set down in the remaining words of the Text, wherein you have

1. The Act injoy'n'd; ἀπορίσσετε, *separate.*

2. The Object; τὸ Βαρνάβαν καὶ τὸ Σαῦλον, *separate me Barnabas and Saul.*

3. The

3. The end for what; εἰς ἔργον for a work.
 4. The determination of that work; ὃ προσκεκλημένοι αὐτῶς for the work whereunto I have called them.
 Of these in their Order: and first,

The Holy Ghost said.

אֲרֹן 1. Of those five things for want of which the second Jewish Temple
 אֲרֹן 2. sunk below the first, and its Glory seem'd faint in the comparison,
 וְחַכְמֵי 3. the Chiefest was the Holy Ghost; who became silent; his Oracles
 אֲשֶׁר 3. ceased then, and he spake no more by the Prophets. A thing not only
 חֲשֵׁמִים 4. confest by the Thalmudists, (who say our Rabbins have deliver'd to
 שְׂכִינָה 5. us, that from the time of Haggai, Zechary and Malachy, רוח נסתלקה
 רוח 5. The Holy Ghost was taken away from Israel) but so
 חֲקִירָה מִי שְׂרָאָה The Holy Ghost was taken away from Israel) but so
 The Ark of the Covenant, with the Propitiatory and Cherubins, the Urin and Thummim; the fire that came down from Heaven to consume the burnt offerings; the Glory of God that appear'd between the cherubins; and the Holy Ghost that spake by the Prophets. See Gemar. c. 1. in Ioma. See also Galat. 1. 4. citing the same out of R. Elias, R. Solomon, R. David.

so for the fifth, the spirit, he was restored in kind with infinite improvement, that of Joel fulfill'd, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, for they were all baptized with the Holy Ghost; baptized in rivers of living waters, which did flow out of the belly of themselves, for this he spake of the Spirit, which all that believed on him should receive, Joh. 7. 39. so that Joel did scarce feel or foresee enough to prophesie of this abundance, but the inundations were almost like Christ's receivings, without measure. Nor were his Inspirations as of old, dark and mysterious Oracles, direction in rapture, where the Message it self was to have another revelation, and it must be prophecy to understand as well as utter: But in the Gospel his effusions run clear, and transparent as the Water that expresseth them, revealing even all the unknown languages that were the conduits and conveyances; all plain express direction, such as that of the Text.

Now amongst all the several uses of the Holy Ghost for which he was pour'd out in this abundance, amongst all the designs he did engage himself in, and advance, he does not seem to have a greater agency nor to interests himself more in any, than in qualifying for, and separating to Church-Offices. This seems to be his great work: And indeed how can he choose but be particularly concern'd in those Offices which are his own. χαρίσματα, his gifts? Timothy's is expressly call'd so, in each of his Epistles, 1 Tim. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 6. And when our Saviour, Ephes. 4. 8. is said to give the gifts of the Holy Ghost to men, it is added how, ver. 11. He gave some Apostles, some Evangelists, some Pastors

Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, namely because those gifts enabled for those Offices, and all the reason in the World that he should have a special hand in giving; where himself is to be receiv'd. Receive the Holy Ghost, that was from the beginning, and is yet the installation to them: And if we take them from their divine original, from that great Pastor and Bishop of our souls, who was the maker of them too, Thus he was consecrated; the spirit of the Lord is upon me, therefore he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel, Luke 4. 18. And when he comes to ordain succession, he says, as my Father sent me, so send I you: And he breathed upon them, and said, Receive the Holy Ghost, Joh. 20. 21. And after bids them tarry at Jerusalem till they should be endued with power from above, Luk. 24. 47. That is, endued with the Holy Spirit, Act. 1. The present Barnabas and Saul were sent by his Commission in the Text; and v. 4. And Saint Paul tells the Elders of the Churches of Asia, the Holy Ghost made them overseers, ἐπισκοπους, Act. 20. 28. Timothy had his Office, διὰ Προφήτας, by immediate designation of the Holy Ghost, 1 Tim. 4. 14. ^a Clemens Rhomanus saith, the Apostles ^d Ep. ad corint. p. 54. edit. Junii. out of those they had converted, did ordain Bishops and Deacons ^e Apud Euseb. l. 3. c. 23. ^f On 1 Tim 4. 14. ^g Matth. 28. 20. ^h Matth. 12. 25. ⁱ contrive

πρωμωτον, having first try'd them by the Holy Ghost, and so taught by his revelation who should be the men. And Clemens Alexandrinus says, John after his return to Asia, ordain'd throughout all the regions about, ⁱ ἐν τῇ Πρωμασίᾳ οὐ μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἔστιν, such as were signified and design'd by the Holy Ghost. So that Oecumenius pronounces in the general, ^j πρὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἐν τῇ Προμασίᾳ, the Bishops that were made; they made not inconsiderately on their own heads, but such whom the Spirit did command. Chrysostom said as much before, and ^k Theophylact. Nor can we doubt that he maintains his interest in this affair even at this day: But that our *Veni Creator Spiritus*, same Holy Ghost eternal God, does call him to preside in these so concerning Solemnities; For Christ, when he commission'd his Apostles, assuring them, behold I am with you even to the end of the World; which promise he performs only vicariâ Spiritus presentia, by the presence of the Holy Ghost, who is his Vicar, as Tertullian expresses; nor can the Spirit be with them till then, but by making them be till then; which being done by Ordination, that Ecclesiastical procreation, (for so they derive themselves to the World's end;) upon the strength of that promise we may assure our selves he does assist as truly, though not so visibly, as when he said here, separate.

The Holy Ghost's concernment being thus secured, I have this one thing only to suggest; that they who set themselves against all separation to these Offices and Orders, in and for which the Holy Ghost hath so appear'd, (what they be I dispute not now) they fight against the Holy Ghost, and thrust him out of that in which he hath almost signally interest'd himself. And they that do intitle the Spirit to this opposition, do not onely make Gods Kingdom divided against itself, or raise a faction in the Trinity, and stir up division betwixt those Three One Persons; but they set the same Person against himself and make the Holy Spirit resist the Holy Ghost: You know the inference prest upon them that did this but interpretatively in the Devils Kingdom, and did make Satan cast out Satan: And is't not here of force? And they who make the Spirit cast out the Holy Ghost, contrive

trive as much as in them lies *Gods Kingdom shall not stand*. I will not parallel the guilts. Those *Pharisees* blasphemed the *Holy Spirit* in his *Miracles*, ascribing that to *Beelzebub* which was the *immediate work of the Holy Ghost*: (and such indeed do sin *unpardonably*, because they sin *irrecoverably*; for *Miracles* being the utmost and most manifest express wherein the *Holy Ghost* exerts himself, they who can harden their understandings against them have left themselves no means of conviction, and *cannot be forgiven*, because they *cannot be rectified or reclaimed*.) These others do blaspheme the *Spirit* in his *immediate inspirations* and *χαρίσματα*, ascribing to the *spirit of Antichrist* all those *Offices and Orders*, which these gifts of the *Holy Ghost* were power'd from Heaven immediately to *qualifie for*, and *separate to*; things in which he hath as signally appeared as in his *Miracles*: and as he made these *means* to convince the World, so he made those the *Officers* of doing it, and set them to *out-last the other*. Now in the same nearness that these two guilts come up one towards the other, just to the same degree these *sin the sin against the Holy Ghost*. For the *Holy Ghost* said, *separate*.

2.

So I pass to the *second*, to those whom this Injunction is directed to. And thence I do observe in general, that

1 Joh 2. 20.

Notwithstanding all the *interest* and *office* that the *Holy Ghost* assumes in these same *separations*, yet there is something left besides for *Man* to do. Although he *superintend*, they have a *work* in it: He is the *Unction*, but it must be apply'd by *laying on of hands*. I have call'd them, saith he in the *Text*; and yet to them that *ministred*, the *Holy Ghost* said, *do ye separate*. I do not now examin what *degree* and *order* of men they were whom the *Holy Ghost* here commissions for this *Office*. The Judgement of the *Antient Church* in this affair is enough known, by the condemnation of *Aerius*, and by the Fate of *Ischyas* and *Colluthus*: and for the *present instance*, in which they are call'd *Doctors* that are bid to do it, there hath enough been said to prove *διδασκαλ* a Title of a *Bishop*; to which I shall only add, that it was a *variation of Name* that stuck by them untill *Bede's* age, in which, what *Bishops* signified does come under no question; for he does say, *that Austin call'd together to the Conference, Episcopos five Doctores, the Bishops or the Doctors of the Province*. Besides that there was then in *Antioch* a *Bishop* *Ἐπί Κλαυδίου Βασιλέως Ῥωμαίων, Πέτρος τῷ Ἀποστόλῳ χειροτονήσαντι* *Ἐυδίου ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ, μετενομάδουσαν* *οἱ παλαιοὶ λεγόμενοι Ναζωραῖοι καὶ Γαλιλαῖοι, Χριστιανοί*, *In the time of Claudius Emperour of Rome, and of Euodius, whom the Apostle Peter had ordain'd at Antioch, those that before were call'd Nazarenes and Galilaans, were call'd Christians*: A thing which happen'd a little before this separation in the *Text*, as you find *Chap. 11. 26*. But who they were that us'd to separate for every Execution of these *holy Offices*, will appear from the Instances that I shall make to prove the present Observation, that, besides that of the *Holy Ghost* there was an outward call: And whomsoever the *Spirit sent*, he commanded that they should have *Commission* from *Men*. And all my former *Testimonies* for the *Holy Ghost*, bear witness for this too. The *Text* is positive; here was a *Congé d'eslire* for *Barnabas* and *Saul*. *Timothy* had his *Office*

a Epip. har. 75

b Vide Athanas. Apol. 2.

How this judgment did derive it self down into the Reformation, may be seen from the account of the Frates Bohemi, who fought over the world for Episcopal Ordination, and were never quiet in their consciences till they had obtained it. Vide Johan. in Comment. Ratio Disciplinæ ordinisque Ecclesiastici in unitate Fratrum Bohemorum.

c Bed. Eccl. hist.

1. 2. cap. 2.

d Suid. in voce Χριστιανισμός.

Office *Ἀφ' ἐπιθέσεως*, by designation of the Spirit; 1 Tim. 4. 14. yet *ἡ ἐπιθέσεως χερῶν*, with laying on of hands, *ibid.* yea *Ἀφ' ἐπιθέσεως χερῶν μου*, by the laying on of my hands, 2 Tim. 1. 6. And Timothy was plac'd at Ephesus, as Titus also left at Crete, to ordain others in the same manner; St. Paul providing for the succession of the Rite and Ceremony as well as of the Office. And in St. Clement's Testimony, *δοκιμάσαντες πνεύματι*, *Ἀπόστολοι καθίσαντες*; the Spirit try'd, but the Apostles constituted. And down as low as Trajan's time; when St. John's date was almost out, his life and his Commission expiring, and the Churches of Asia to be provided with succession, the Men were *ὑπὸ πνεύματος συγκλημένοι*, signified by the Holy Ghost: But the Chron. Alex. faith, *περιέειν αὐτὸν ἐν Ἀσίαν καὶ τὰς ἀλlochόους παρτίδας*, *ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόντας καὶ κληρικούς*, that he went clean throughout Asia and the adjacent Regions, constituting not only Bishops, but others of inferior Clergie: And even in the lowest thus it was; when the first Deacons were to be made, Men full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom were to be look'd out, *Act.* 6. 3. But yet that did not authorize them, the Holy Ghost and Wisdom did not make a Deacon: For besides that, the Apostles will appoint them over their business, *ibid.* and they are brought to them, and they do lay their hands upon them, v. 6. Thus it was in those times of full effusion of the Holy Ghost: Men always had to do in giving that Commission: so that whoever pleads an Order of the Spirit for his Office, (although such a Commission of the Spirit, if he had it, would evidence it self, and if it were, it would appear, for 'twas the manifestation of the Spirit that was given to every man to profit withall; yet) if we yield him his pretensions, and let his own incitations pass for inspirations, and his strong fancie for the Holy Ghost, if the Holy Ghost did call him, who did separate him? Whom the Holy Ghost calls, he sends to his Officers to empower; they both work, He says, do ye separate.

Tit. 1. 5.

1 Cor. 12. 7.

And here a Consideration offers it self unto those holy Fathers, whom the Spirit makes his Associates in separating men to sacred Offices; that when they set apart even to the lowest stalls of the Church, they labour to perform it so that the Holy Ghost may be engag'd, and act along with them in the performance: Separate such as they may presume the Spirit hath call'd, and will own. He does not call the ignorant, or appoint blind eyes for the Body of Christ, or make men Seers to lead into the pit. The Holy Spirit calls not the unclean, or the intemperate; we know it was another sort of Spirit that went into the swine: nor does he ever say, Separate me those who separate themselves, the Schismatics: the Spirit calls not such as break the unity of the Spirit; nor sets into the rank of higher members in Christ's body those who rear that body, and themselves from it: the factions, those that will not be bound neither in bonds of peace nor of obedience, but break all holy ties, that make commotions, and rave and foam, sure 'tis the Legion that sends them, and not the Holy Ghost. He whom the Spirit will call, must not be under the reputation of a Vice, but should be of a good report, lest he fall into reproach, and so into the snare of the Devil, 1 Tim. 3. 7. i. e. lest he fall into reproach, and then his teaching do so too, and men learn to slight or not heed the doctrines of such a one as is under scandal for his life, and so the

Mar. 5. 131

Luke 84

^a Theophyl. in locum.

^b Matt. 4. 19.

Act. 8. 20.

^c 1 Tim. 5. 17.

Heb. 13. 7.

^d Mat. 19. 28.

^e Rev. 1. 20.

^f Phot. ep. 54.

^g Matt. 18. 10.

^h Apoc. 1. 20.

ⁱ 1 Tim. 5. 17.

Devil get advantage over them, and do ensnare them. ^a *ἄνθρωπος γὰρ τὸ εἰς σκάνδαλον προκαλεῖται, πάλιν ἐστὶ ἀσθενοῦς.* For to be to any an occasion of falling, is to be the Devils snare. Now Christ's ^b Fishers of men, those whom the Holy Ghost appoints to spread nets for the catching Souls to God, their lives must not lay snares for the Devil, and entangle Souls in the toys of perdition. Those also that come to you out of Ambition or of greediness of gain, the spirit calls not neither: He calls we see *εἰς ἔργον*, to a work; so that they who seek more then they can well attend the labour of, or are qualified for the work of, they are not of his sending. But of all men the Holy Ghost will least deal with the Simoniackal, that come not to a work, but to a market, that contract with Patrons for the spirits call, or, worse than their master Simon, would hire the Holy Spirit himself to say, *Separate me them*: The Successors of the Apostles have a Canonical return to these, *Your money perish with you*. They whom the Holy Ghost does call must have his gifts and temper; St. Paul hath set all down to Timothy and Titus, and those who minister in this employment, if they will be what he hath made them, joynt Commissioners with him, and his Co-workers, they must order it so that he may work and act, which he does not but where he calls, nor does he call but those whom he hath qualified: And 'tis of those only whom he hath call'd, that he says, *ἀπορίσσετε*; Separate.

The Third particular, the thing enjoyn'd; And the Holy Ghost said, *Separate*.

The *separateness* of the Functions of the Clergy, the *incommunicableness* of their Offices to persons not separated for them, is so express a doctrine both of the Letter of the Text, and of the Holy Ghost, that sure I need not to say more, though several heads of Probation offer themselves: As first the condition of the Callings, which does divide from the Community, and sets them up above it; And here I might tell you of *bearing rule*, of *thrones*, of *stars* and *Angels*, and other words of as high sence, and yet not go out of the Scripture bounds, although the dignity did not die with the Scripture Age, or expire with the Apostles: the age as low as Photius words it thus, *τὸ Ἀποστολικὸν καὶ θεῖον ἀξίωμα δὲ τὸ ἀσθενοῦς τὸ ἀρχιερεὺς γίνεσθαι κληρέμενον*. That Apostolical and Divine Dignity, which the chief Priests are acknowledged to be possess of by right of Succession. Styles which I could derive yet lower, and they are of a prouder sound than those the humble ears of this our age are so offended with. But these heights it may be would give Ombrages; although 'tis strange that men should envy them to those, who are only exalted to them, that they may with the more advantage take them by the hands to lift them up to Heaven. Those nearnesses to things above do but more qualifie them to be *πρόξενος τῷ βασιλεὺς τῷ ἐξουῶ*, in Theoph. and to draw near to God on your behalf, that those your *Angels* also may see the face of your Father which is in Heaven; and those stars are therefore set in Christ's right hand, that they may shed a blessed influence on you from thence.

2. The *ἔργον* and the *κῆπος*, The Work and labour of the work, (the one is the Text's, and the other Saint Paul's word) require a whole man, and therefore a man separate: and if St. Paul, one of

our

our separated persons here, who had the fulness of the Spirit, and the fulness of Learning too, that was brought up in the Schools, and brought up in Paradise, taught by the Doctors, and taught by the mouth of the Lord in the third heaven, snatcht from the feet of Gamaliel to the presence of God, to have a beatifical Vision of the Gospel, if after all this he cry out, *who is sufficient for these things?* sure they are not sufficient, who in those little intervals which their trades and necessities afford them, fall into fits and frensies of Religion, have a sharp Paroxysme of irregular convuls'd Divinity, as if they were its *ερεπόμενοι*, possess with their Theology 'till their weariness, and not knowing what to say do exorcise them.

But not to speak only to the wild fancies of this Age, the Scripture says of the men of these callings, they are *taken from among Men*, and Heb. 5. 1. *ordain'd for Men in things pertaining to God.* And such discriminations are evinc'd by all the expressions of a Church in Scripture. 'Tis call'd the *body of Christ*: Now the parts of a body, as where they are so separate that they divide from one another, they do not make a body, but are an Execution; so where they are not separate in a diversity of Organs, for several faculties and operations, it may be a dead Element, as similar bodies are, but cannot be that body which St. Paul describes, 1 Cor. 12. *Which is not one Member, but many*, ver. 14. *And if they were all one member, where were the body?* v. 19. and indeed all that Chapter is inspired for this Argument. In Christ's Church 'tis as impossible that every one can be *ἑπιστατον* an Overseer, as that every part in the body can be an Eye: And the whole frame of Man may be nothing else but a Tongue, as well as every Christian may be a Preacher: And if it might, *where indeed were the hearing?* as St. Paul does ask. The Church is also call'd a *building*, and Gods *house*: Now it is true that every Christian is by St. Peter call'd a *lively stone*, and all of them *built up a Spiritual house, an holy Priest-hood*, 1 Pet. 2. 5. and they all are a *Royal Priest-hood, an holy Nation, a peculiar separate people*, ver. 9. Yet all this is no more of privilege than is affirmed in the very same words of the *Jewish Nation*, Exod. 19. 6. Where yet God had his *separated Levites, Priests and High-priests* too. But sure 'tis manifest enough that in this building, as in others, stones have their *separate places and distinct*; every one cannot bear up the Corner, or be a pillar and foundation-stone; much less can every one place it self in the Ephod, assume to be one of the *Urim* and the *Thummim*-stones, and there break out in Oracles, and give Responses; and every rubbish stone set it self in the Mitre, and shine in the head ornaments, as if it were one of the *precious stones of Sion*. In fine, (to speak now out of Metaphor,) not only the transactions of the Text, which is a precedent for men to commission such and such; but also all Scripture rules direct a Choice; and where there is Election, there is also dereliction, and both evince a separation: And if all the Nations in the World have had their *distinct Officers* for Religion, and, as it were, to signalize the *separateness* of their function, in many Nations they did live apart from Men: The Priests had their *adya* as well as the *Deities*; dark solitary Groves were made choice of, not so much for the God, as for his *Officers retirement*; so that every appearance of him also was a *Vision*, and the Priest was reveal'd as well as the Oracle,

and all this at the first to make a kind of sacred Pomp for the solemnity of awfulness, (though afterwards it often prov'd but opportunity for foul performances.) And if to this uniform practice of the World Gods attestation be set, who order'd it in his own Government; nor that as a *Levitical* or *Jewish* administration, but it was practis'd amongst his own from the beginning, and when dominions were but greater families, there were still *distinct* persons for the employments of Religion; that was the office and the privilege of the *first-born*: *Esau* was call'd *profane* for selling that *birth-right* of his: (And the word in the Text here, ἀποπλάττει *separate*, is the same which God does word the *sanctifying* the *first-born* for him with, *Exod.* 13. 2.) 'Twere easie to deduce all this out of all ancient Jewish Records. And when the practice ever since hath been the same in *Christ's* Religion; after all this, sure nothing else but absolute defection of the *Notions* of *Mankind*, and blotting out all the impressions of *Universal Nature* and *Universal Religion*, or else an absolute *Command* from *Heaven*, could alter this Establishment; from which command we are so far, that 'tis the *Holy Ghost* himself that said expressly ἀποπλάττει *separate*.

Now this Ἀποπλάττει, this Separateness in *Function*, does infer upon us a separateness in *Life* and *Conversation*, and they who are thus set apart from the *World*, must keep themselves *unspotted from the World*. To *separate* and *Consecrate* are but two words for the same thing: *Separate three Cities* is the Command in *Deut.* 19. 2. and they *sanctified three*, *Josh.* 20. 7. Our *Offices* assume them both, and all are *holy Orders*. Now *separate* and *pure* are both so primitive, and so essential notions of *holy*, that truly I cannot determin which of them is *original*, and which *secondary*: Our *Consecration* does challenge both; and as we will be *separate* in our calling, so we must be *separate* in our lives, not *conforming our selves to the World*, for I *have chosen you out of the World*, saith *Christ*. A torrent licence of an Age must not carry us along; an *Universal Custom* of the *World* must be no precedent, and can be no excuse for us to do what is irregular. We are ἀποπλάττει *separate*; and that the *World* does such things is no more a plea for us to do so, than that because the *World* is *Common ground*, therefore the *Church* is so too, fit to be put to all the uses of the field, or of worse places. Were it a reasonable argument; because I see that the whole *Country's* till'd, why should I not break up the *holy places*, and plow the *Temple*? Why, so we are *enclos'd* for God, and *separated* for the uses of Religion, and to preserve our selves *pure* for them. Our *Saviour* says that the Community of Christians is a *City upon an hill*; and then sure the *consecrated Persons* are the *Temples* of that *City*, the *separate places* of it; and then as they are most in sight (the *Church* is ordinarily the most *visible building*) so truly he that sees one of them, it should be as if he saw an *open Church*, where there is nothing else but *holy duty*, as if his life were *Liturgie*, publick Service and Worship of God. Hath your zeal never role, at least your indignation, at the profane fury of this Age, which never made a stop in violation of things sacred, when to its heap of other *Sacrileges*, it added most contemptuous defilements of *God's houses*; making the place that *Angels* met us in to Worship, and

* Vid. Tharg.
Hierosolym.
Gen. 9. 3. &
Jonath. ibid. &
Solom. larch.
Glossam ad Ex-
od. 19. 22. &
ad cap. 24. 5.
* Vide Ifido.
Pelusio. l. 2.
Epist. 47.

Jac. 1. 27.

* Rom. 12. 2.
* Joh. 15. 19.

Matt. 5. 14.

* 1 Cor. 11. 10.

God

God^a dwelt in to *bleſs* us there, the place appointed for the Divineſt^b *Mysterieſ* of our *Redemption*, for the Celebration of *Chriſt's Agonieſ*, for the Commemoration of the *bleſſed Sacrifice*, the place for nothing but *Chriſt's Blood*, then to become the place of a moſt odious and insolent uncleaneſſ? If I had worded this more aggravatingly, it had been only to infer that then to ſee a *conſecrated perſon* to polute himſelf with thoſe black *foulneſſeſ* that made *hell* and made *fiendſ*, is ſure a ſadder and a more unhappy ſpectacle. If an *Apoſtle* become wicked, he is in our *Saviour's Character* a *Devil*; *Have I not choſen* John 6. 7. *Twelve*, and one of you is a *Devil*? Yea if the good Saint Peter do become a ſcandal, tempt to that which is not good; *Get thee behind* Mat. 16. 23. *me, Satan*. *Chriſt* calls his neareſt Officers *Starſ*; Emblems of a *great ſeparatenefſ* thoſe, that teach them how far their Converſation ſhould be remov'd from Earth; for they are of another Orbe, *Heaven* is the *Region* of *Starſ*: But they are *Emblems* of a greater *purity*; there's nothing in the World ſo clean as light, 'tis not poſſible ſo much as to fully ſhine; it may irradiate dung-hillſ, but they do not deſile it; you may Eclipse a Star but cannot ſpot it; you may put out the light, you cannot ſtain it. 'Tis a word for God's purity: only his light is glory; and as his holineſſ is ſo ſeparate that it is incommunicable, ſo his *Light* is *inacceſſible*; Yet ſure they that are *ſtarſ* in *Chriſt's right hand*, they do come neer, and mix their light with his; and they of all men muſt be pure and holy, whom the *ſpirit* calls to that place, as he does all whom he calls to that ſeparation that he did *Barnabas* and *Saul*, the Perſonſ and the next Part; *Separate me* Barnabas and Saul.

I intend not to make particular reflections upon theſe perſonſ, although the Character of *Barnabas* be regiſtred the 11. Chap. v. 24. *He was a good man, full of Faith, and of the Holy Ghoſt*, and the good influence that that had upon the people follows; *And much people was added to the Church*: And as for *Saul*, though he began the Chriſtian perſecution, and was baptiz'd in the *fiſt Martyr-blood*, and breath'd out *threatningſ*, ſo that nothing but *thunder* could out-voice him, Acts 9. 17. and at laſt was born as an *ἄετις*, as an *untimely birth*, aborting through thoſe woundſ which his own handſ had made in the Church, 1 Cor. 15. and making himſelf a birth with ripping up her bowelſ; yet this *Abortive* prov'd the *ſtrongeſt birth*, and 'twas a *Miſcarriage* into the *chiefeſt Apoſtle*. As he began the after-ſufferingſ of Chriſt in *Stephen*; ſo he fulfill'd the *ὑποφύλαξι*, and made up all that was behind, in himſelf, being in *deathſ* more than thoſe he inflicted. The ſound of his *preaching* was louder than that at his *Conversion*, out-voic'd the *thunder*; for this went out into all landſ, as if himſelf alone meant to execute the whole Commiſſion, *Preach the Goſpel to every creature*: which he Mat. 16. 15. did almoſt, not only preaching to thoſe placeſ where *Chriſt* was not Rom. 15. 10. named, without the other Apoſtleſ line; but even where the reſt im- 2 Cor. 10. 16. ploy'd themſelveſ, he wrought as much as they, in *Asia* as Saint *John*, at *Antioch* as *Peter*; yea and at *Rome* too, having as much to do in their foundation: If I had ſaid more, I could have brought the *Popeſ* own *Seal* for evidence; where not only both are, but Saint *Paul* hath the *right hand*: And truly if they had had the luck to think at fiſt of founding all their pretenſionſ on Saint *Paul*, his care of

2 Cor. 11. 28.
John 21. 15.

^a Acts 9. 17.
Putting on his
hands he said,
the Lord hath
sent me, that thou
mightest be filled
with the Holy
Ghost.

^b Acts 9. 15.
& 22. 14.

^c Ἀποστολὴ εἰς
ἔργον, τὴν ἐν
εἰς Ἀποστολὴν.
Separate for the
work, that is,
for the Apostleship.
Occumenius
upon this text.
And so Theoph.
καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀπο-
στολῇ μετὰ
Βαρνάβαν εἰς
τὴν Ἀποστολὴν
Theoph. in Act.
Apostol. p. 2.
& in locum
p. 118.
Vid Theoph.
in locum
p. 119.

of all the Churches would have born them out, as well as feed my Lambs does now. But these considerations I pass; though they would give a Man that hath done mischief in the Church a pattern for the measures of his future Service to the Church. The thing I shall concern my self in, is the solemn separation here of those who were before separated to the work of the Gospel; Barnabas sent by the Church of Jerusalem to Antioch, Act. 11. 22. and Paul not only separated from his Mothers womb, Gal. 1. 15. but chosen by express Revelation, and by the laying on of Ananias's hands that so he might receive the Holy Ghost, qualified to ^b Preach the Gospel to the Gentiles and to Kings. In which work both of them had for some years exercised themselves. Yet here is a new consecration, and they are taken up to a condition more separate and distinct from what they were before. And all those vast advantages in which these persons did excell; the one of Faith and fulness of the Holy Ghost, the other, besides those, of express and immediate mission from Heaven; and the most strange success their labours had been blest with, all these I say, did not qualify them to assume these powers which the Holy Ghost commands another separation to entall them in: And 'twas this Call that call'd Paul to be an ^c Apostle, Rom. 1. 1. (as from this time he is always call'd Paul, not sooner.) Nor do we find any least footsteps of their being Apostles before, though Barnabas were sent to Antioch. yet he does not undertake what Peter and John did at Samaria in the very same case; for they confirm and give the Holy Ghost, Act. 8. 15, 17. but Barnabas does nothing but Exhort, Act. 11. 23. and he and Paul together Preach the Word abroad, but we find nothing else they enterpriz'd: but from this time they exercise Jurisdiction, settle Churches, and ordain them Elders in the Churches, Ch. 14. 22, 23. and (as it does appear) singly deriv'd these powers to others, to be exercised by them singly. To Titus most expressly, Tit. 1. 5. the like also to Timothy, with all the other Acts of Jurisdiction, (of which their Epistles are the Records) particularly that of Censures, which Paul himself had inflicted on offenders in the Churches he had planted. Powers these, which by such steps and by degrees of separation an Apostle himself receives, and does not execute till he ascend the highest, that which they have a new solemnity ordain'd from Heaven to entate them in, by a new laying on of hands, and the holy Ghost himself commanding, separate.

The separateness of this highest order in the Church is a doctrine handed down to us both by the writings of all Ages and the practices; (two things, which as they scarcely do concur in such a visible degree in any other things in our Religion, so also when they do concur, they make and secure tradition beyond all contradiction, give it sufficient infallibility: and truly he that does refuse the evidence which such tradition gives to all the motives of believing Christianity, if he be not a Socinian, he must be an Enthusiast, and can receive his Religion only from Revelation.) Now the matter of fact of this tradition is a subject for Volumes, not for a discourse, and it hath filled so many, that there is nothing left unsaid, or to be said against, as to the main: And they that pick some little sayings seeming against this order out of those Ancients which were themselves of it, and wrote much expressly

pressly for it; and think by those means to confute it, do the same thing with that *Romanist*, who tore some little shreds, that look as if they favour'd some opinions of the *Romanists*, out of the Books of *Protestants*, most of which were directly writ against the *Church of Rome*; and putting those together went about by them to convince the world there never were any such things as *Protestants*, but they that did profess to be so were all *Papists*.

But I will say no more then my *Text* hath done; which evidences it not a separation only of *Degree*, but *Order*; by a new Ceremony, and commissionating to new powers: If I would stay on words, 'tis expressed here by one that speaks very great distances, *Αποστατε*, *separate*, which does in *Scripture* word the distances that the censures of the Church do make, *Luke 6. 22.* and still in the *Greek Liturgies*, when absolution is given, 'tis said to be *εἰς πᾶσαν ἀγῶν καὶ ἀπορίστην*; to free them from all curse and separation; as if to pass into the bounds of this uncall'd, were such a thing as to leap over the Censures of the Church, over the Line of Excommunication; and to break through this wall of separation, were to break through *Anathema's* and *Curses*: Yea, 'tis used to express the distance betwixt the Lord's two hands, his right hand and his left, at the day of Doom, *Mat. 25. 32.* betwixt which hands there is a *μεγα χάσμα*, a most insuperable gulf.

But these I shall urge. Indeed the *Fathers* of the Church have been in these last days counted *ἀπεριστοιχοί*, *separate* in the severest sense, cast out as the dung of the Earth; and the calling it self was under reprobation, as if it separated only to the left hand of God: But so it was with their Predecessours in the *Text*, Saint Paul says of himself and the rest of his Order, that they were counted *ὡς περὶ καθάρματα* and *πλημνία*, as the filth of the World, and the off-scouring of all things, *1 Cor. 4. 13.* and as if they were called only to ruine, and consecrated for a sacrifice, he says, the Lord hath set us forth as men appointed to death, *vers. 9.* Indeed since God hath pleased to own you as his Churches, *Angels*, we are not troubled if some have counted you as the off-scouring of the Earth, while we know *Angels* do relate to Heaven: And let them consider how they will reprobate those to the left hand of God, whom Christ calls stars in his right hand, and he is at the right hand of his Father; and while you were accounted so you did but follow them that went before in *Sufferings* as well as *Office*; and to do so was part of the *ἔργον*, the work that they were separated to; which is the next part, *For the work*.

I shall but run this over, and reflect upon it as I pass, according as it is of present Concernment; and

First, Saint Paul's work was to Preach the Gospel, and we find him doing it from this time forward to his End. The high Priest of the Jews was called the Angel of the Lord of Hosts; of which name an Heathen does give this account, that he was call'd so, because he was, *Ἄγγελος τῶ Θεοῦ πρεσβυτέρων*, the Angel or the Messenger of Gods Commands: so *Diodorus Siculus*. And *Malachy* gives the same reason, *Mal. 2. 7.* he was the Substitute to him upon Mount Sinai, and gave the Law also, only without the thunder. Our Governours Apoc. 1. 20† succeed into the Name, they are the Churches Angels; and when we hear the word from them, we have it as it were from Heaven again, and

Acts 7. 1.

and we receive our Law too *Ἀγγελαῖς Ἀγγέλων*, by the disposition of Angels. Indeed the Case now is not like Saint Paul's, the Gospel then was to be first revealed to all the World, and by continual inculcating secur'd against the depravations which all the malice of the Devil and the World sought to infuse, and the unskilfulness of infant Christians did make them apt to entetrain: But now we are all confirm'd Christians: Yet truly the time is now such as did give occasion for Saint Paul's charge to Timothy, 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2, 3. a time wherein they will not indure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers. He therefore that is in Timothy's place must heap up Reproofs and Exhortations; or he must heap good sound dispensers of them: Such as will feed the Lambs with sincere milk, not chaf'd and heated with commotion and busie restless Faction; not embitter'd with overflowings of a too-sul gall; not sour'd with eager sharpnesses of a malicious or a dissatisfied mind; not impoisoned with the foul tinctures of a scandalous life, nor the Corrosive infusions of Schismatical and turbulent opinions. He that caters thus for his flock, and provides such as by doctrine and by practice do instruct them to live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty; He, like the Angel on Mount Sinai, gives the Law to a Nation together, preaches to his whole Diocess at once, Continually.

2.

The second work was praying for, and blessing them: This does begin, and close every Epistle; that he asserts of himself constantly, and 'tis well known the *χαρίσματα*; gifts of those times inspir'd for this Work. Now thus our Angels also are Angels of Incense, the High Priests Office in especial: Those that did daily Minister perform'd a service of Incense too, that did accompany the prayers of the people, and sent them up in perfume; but the High Priests

^b Lev. 16. 12,
13.

^a *ἱερεὺς δὲ ὁμοιωὺς Ἀυφὸ-
τητος.* Greg.
Naz. Orat. 6.

ad Greg. Nyssen.

כחו הכהנים

Aben. Ezz.

ad Psal. 99.

^c *ἱεραὺς ἱεραὺς.*

Greg. Naz.

ubi supra

^d *Ἀρχιερεὺς.*

Philo de vita

Mosis l. 1, & 3.

^e Had not Moses

his chosen stood

before him in

the breach, to

turn away his

wrath lest he

should destroy

them.

the prayer of Moses (Now Moses and Aaron were among the Priests, Psal. 99. 6. and He was the chief Priest) did withhold the Arm of God when it was stretcht forth in fury to destroy, and did commit a violence upon the Lord, such as he could not grapple with, but seems to deprecate, and fain avoid, and says, *Let me alone, that I may destroy them*, Exod. 32. 10. If thou wilt permit me, my fury shall prevail upon them, saith the Arabick, but if thou pray it cannot; therefore *let go thy prayer*, saith the Chald. and *let me alone*. And they who shall consider also that his prayer did maintain a breach against the Lord, when he had made one, and was coming to enter in a storm of indignation, then this made head against him, and repuls't him, Psal. 106. 23. They that consider these effects, will certainly desire the Prayers and Benedictions of those Gods chiefest Officers of blessing, those that are consecrated to bless in the Name of the Lord; and will have them in love for his works sake.

Their Third work is Government, which may be some do look upon as privilege and not as work; the expectation and delight of their ambitions, and not the fear and burthen of their shoulders. But ambition may as rationally fly at Miracles as Government, and as hopefully gape after diversity of Tongues, as at presiding in the Church, the

the powers of each did come alike from Heaven, and were the mere gifts of the *Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 12. 18. It was so in the Law; when God went to divide part of *Moses* burthen of Government amongst the LXX, he came down and took off the Spirit that was upon him, and gave it to the LXX, Num. 11. 25. A work this that may have reason to supersede much of that which I first mentioned: For notwithstanding all Saint Paul's Assistances of Spirit, he does reckon that care that came upon him daily from the Churches amongst his persecutions, and it summes up his Catalogue of sufferings, 2 Cor. 11. Such various Necessities there are by which Government is distracted, and knows not how to temper it self to them. For sometimes it must condescend: Paul notwithstanding Apostolical decrees made in full Council that abrogated Circumcision, (as the Holy Ghost had declared it void before,) yet is fain to comport so far with the violent humours of a party as to Circumcise Timothy, at the very same time when he delivered those decrees to the Churches to keep, Act. 16. 3, 4. yet afterwards when Circumcision was looked on as Engagement to the whole Law, and to grant them that one thing, was but to teach them to ask more, and to be able to deny them nothing; then he suffers not Titus to be Circumcised, nor gave place to them by submission, no not for an hour, Gal. 2. 3, 5. Thus the Spirit of Government is sometimes a Spirit of meekness, does its work by soft yieldings, and breaks the Adamant with Cushions which Anvils would not do: The Ocean with daily billows and tides, helpt on with storms of violence, and hurried by tempests of roaring fury, assaults a rock for many Ages; and yet makes not the least impression on it, but is beat back, and made retire in empty foam, in insignificant passion: when a few single drops that distil gently down upon a rock though of Marble, or a small trickle of water that only wets and glides over the stone, insinuate themselves into it; and soften it so as to steal themselves a passage through it. And yet Government hath a rod too, which like Moses's can break the rock, and fetch a stream out of the heart of quarre; and which must be used also: The Holy Spirit himself breathed tempest when he came, blew in a mighty boisterous Wind: nor does he always whisper soft things, he came down first in a sound from heaven, and spoke thunder; nor did it want lightning, the tongue was double flame. Of some we know we must have a Compassion, but others must be saved with terror, Jude 22. 23. which drives me on to the last piece of their work.

ἰδυναμίς,
χαρίματα
ἰσμάτων,
κυβερνήσεις
γένη ἑλωαῖν,
Miracles, gifts
of healing, Go-
vernments, di-
tates of
tongues.

8 [That sense
he puts upon
it in the E-
pistle to the
Galathians, c.
5. v. 3.]

The *Censures of the Church*, the burthen of the *Keys*; which (passing by the private use of them in voluntary penitences, and discipline upon the sick) as they signifie *publick exclusion out of the Church* for scandalous Enormities, and *re-admission into it* upon repentance, have been sufficiently evinc'd to belong to the *Governours of the Church*. The Exercise of these is so much their work that Saint Paul calls them *the Weapons of their spiritual Warfare*; by which they do cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. A blessed victory even for the Conquered; and these the only *Weapons* to archieve it with. If those who sin scandalously, and will not hear the admonitions of the *Church*, were cast out of the *Church*; if not *Religion*, *Reputation* would restrain them somewhat: Not to be thought *fit Company for Christians* would surely make them

prond against their Vices. Shame, the delign'd Effect of these *Censures*, hath great pungencies, the fear of it does goad men into actions of the greatest hazard, and the most unacceptable; such as have nothing lovely in them, but are wholly distastful. There is a Sin whose face is *bloody dismal*, and yet because tis countenanc'd by the *Roysting Ruffian* part of the World, men will defie *Reason* and *Conscience*, *Man's* and *God's Law*, venture the ruine of all that is belov'd and dear to them in this World, and assault *death*, and charge and take *Hell* by violence; rather then be *asham'd* before those *valiant sinners*, *Satans Hectors*: and, they must never come into such Company if they do not go boldly on upon the sin, is of more force with them than all the indearments of this World, than all their fear of *God*, and *Death*, and that which follows. Now if *Religion* could but get such Countenance by the *Censures* of the Church; and every open sinner had this certain fear, I should be turn'd out of all Christian company, shall be avoided as unfit for Conversation; would it not have in some degree the like effect? and if the motive beas much exactly, would not men be *chast* or *sober* or *obedient* for that very reason for which they will now be *kill'd* and be *damn'd*? Without all question Saint *Peter's Censure* on the *intemperate*, 1 Cor. 5. must needs be reformation to him: 'Tis such a sentence to the drunkard, not to company with him, whose Vice is nothing but the *sauce of Company*; and who does sin against his *Body* and against his *faculties* and against his *Conscience*, is *sick*, and is a *Sott*, and goes to *Hell* meerly for *Societies sake*. Now the infliction of these *Censures* is so much the work to which Church-governours are call'd by the *Holy Ghost*, that they are equally call'd by him *to it* and *to Himself*; both are alike bestow'd upon them: *Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins ye retain they are retained*, John 20. 22. And in the first derivations of this office, it was performed with *severities*, such as this Age I doubt will not believe, and when they had no *temporal sword* to be auxiliary to these *Spiritual weapons*.

And now to make reflections on this is not for me to undertake, in such a state of the Church as ours is; wherein the very *faults* of some do give them an *Indemnity*, who having drawn themselves out of the Church, from under its authority, are also got out of the power of its *Censures*: So Chikdren that do run away from their *Fathers house*, they do escape the *Rod*; but they do not consider that withal they run away from the *inheritance*: And many times in those that do not do so, but stay within the family; long intermission of the *Rod*, and *indulg'd license* makes them too big and heady to be brought under *discipline*. And is't not so with us? Among many of those that stay within the Church, (I know not whether I do well to say so, when of these I mean there is little other Evidence of their doing so but this, that they will *swear* and *drink* of the Churches side; blessed Sons of a *demolished Church*, who think to raise their *Mother* a *Temple* by *throwing stones at her*;) by reason of the late overthrow of *Government* and *discipline*, and the consequent *licences*, *Vice* hath been so nurs'd up, not only by an universal, barefac'd, uncorrected practice; but by *principles* of *liberry*, that can dispute down all *Ecclesiastical restraints*, and have set up the *Religion of License*: that now sin is
grown

grown so outrageous, as to be too strong for discipline; nay rather than it should be set up, 'tis to be feared they would endeavour to renverse all in the Church, and enterprise as much in their vices quarrel, as others have done for *mistaken Religion*. And indeed to what purpose were the *Censures*, whose first and medicinal effect is shame, amongst men, where 'tis in very many instances the only shameful thing not to be vicious; where men stand candidates for the reputation of glorious sinners, take to themselves sins they have not committed, that are not theirs, and usurp Vice; sins and damnations hypocrites? What work is here for discipline? But this state wants not precedents; the censures of the Church were not only lay'd aside in the Vastations of the Arian heresie and persecution; when the weapons of the Churches warfare were too weak to make defence against all their cruelties and impieties: and before that in Diocletian's days against the Lapsi: But we find also that Saint Paul is forc'd to break out only in a passionate wish, *ἔμελλον καὶ ἀποκείνω*, I would they were even cut off that trouble you (cut off by excommunication he means) Gal. 5. 12. When he saw the ill humours were too spreading, and too tough also; Sedition and Schisme, wide and obstinate; so that neither his authority could reach, nor his methods cure, but were more likely to exasperate them: Then he does excommunicate them only in desire. And again, 2 Cor. 10. 6. *And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience when your obedience is fulfill'd.* It becomes therefore every one that hath good Will for Sion, to labour to fulfill his own obedience, that so the Church may be empower'd to use Christ's Method for reforming of the rest. And they that will not do so, must know they shall not only answer for their sins, but for refusing to be sav'd from them, that they resist all medicine, as men resolv'd that nothing shall be done towards their Cure, as men that rather choose to perish, and prefer destruction. And for the seasons and degrees of putting this work into Execution, Wisdom must be implor'd from that Spirit of Wisdom that calls unto this work: The last Part; Whereunto I have call'd them.

The Nature of the calling of the Holy Ghost is a Subject that would bear a full discourse. But waving those pretensions which Necessity, and inward incitation do make to be the Calls of the Holy Ghost I shall positively set down that the call of God and of the Holy Ghost; to any Work or Office, (for I enquire not of his calling, to a privilege or state of favour,) is his giving abilities and gifts qualifying for that Work or Office: The call immediate when the gifts were so, but mediate and ordinary, when the abilities are given in his blessing on our ordinary labours. 'Tis so in every sort of things, Exod. 31. 2. See I have call'd Bezaleel, and I have fill'd him with the Spirit of God in Wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of Workmanship, to devise cunning works, and to work in all manner of Workmanship; and behold I have given him Aholiab, and in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have put Wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee: And he repeats the same again, Chap. 35. 30. adding that he hath put in his heart that he may teach both he and Aholiab; so that giving this skill to work and teach is nam'd Gods calling. So in another case, the Lord does say of Cyrus, I have call'd

him, Esay 48. 15. which he explains in the 49. I have *holden him by my right hand to subdue Nations before him, to loose the loyns of Kings, I have girded him.* So when *Isaiah saith, the Lord hath call'd me from the Womb,* or rather says that of our Saviour, *Isa. 49. 1. he tells you how, ver. 5. he form'd me and prepared me from the Womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob to him.* And throughout the *New Testament,* as his Call to a privilege is *χάρις, his grace,* in allowing such a state of favour; so his calls to a Work are his *χαρίσματα, his gifts* enabling for it.

*ab annis quatuordecim,
saith the Arab.

The Gifts of these *Apostles* by which they were enabled for their Office, and which made up their call, are set down: Those of *Barnabas* in the fore-cited 11 *Act.* He was a good man, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost; and *Paul's* call was a little *Extraordinary.* If we look into times, we shall find reason to believe those Revelations in 2 *Côr. 12.* were given to *Paul* a little before this consecration of him in the Text. That Epistle was writ, saith *Baronius,* in the second year of *Nero,* and this separation was in the second of *Claudius,* as may be gathered also in some measure from the famine mention'd in the 28th verse of the 11th chap. betwixt these two were fourteen years: now saith Saint *Paul* when he wrote that, *he had his revelation somewhat above 14. years before;* a little therefore before this solemnity. Here was a call indeed, call'd up to the third heaven to receive instructions for his Office, and for ought he did know, call'd out of his own body too, that he might be the fitter for it; whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knows, v. 2. and that again, v. 3. They whom Gods Spirit qualifies for Consecration to separate to these diviner Offices may be stil'd *Angels* well, when they are call'd from all regards or notices of any body that belongs to them; their gifts and graces set them above the consideration of flesh: In the entertainment of these qualifications the Soul is swallowed up so, that it cannot take cognizance whether it have a body of its own, and is not sensible of that deer partner of it self, it is so onely sensible of this Employment. 'Tis not for an *Apostle* (or for his Successor) to think of things below with much complacency: When these have all their uses, all their glories on, they but make pomp to dress the body; which an *Apostle* does not design for, nor knows whether he be concern'd at all in. He becomes something without a body, and above the Earth, who for a preparative must be taken up to Paradise, and call'd from all commerce and all intelligence with his own body. Saint *Paul* was call'd from Heaven to preach the Gospel; but he was call'd to Heaven to qualifie him for this higher separation, to an *Apostle* and Church-Governour.

And now you see your calling, Holy Fathers: And to pass by such obvious unconcerning observations as at first sight follow; that those who are not qualified are not call'd; I shall only take notice hence of the counter-part of this call, the charge God takes upon him, when he calls to this charge; and that is, he owns and will protect whom himself calls. 'Twas that he promised to the Founder and God of your Order; *I the Lord have call'd thee, and I will hold thine hand, and I will keep thee, Isai. 42. 6.* And when he said of *Cyrus;* *I have call'd him, he said also, he shall make his way prosperous, Isai. 48. 15.*

And

And so he shall be the way what it will ; for thus he said to *Jacob*, *I have called thee, when thou goest through the Water I am with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee*, *Isai. 43. 1, 2.* There was Experience of all this in one of the chief *Princes* of your Order ; when the *Apostles* were scarce safe within their *Ship*, they were so rols'd with waves and fears, yet if our *Lord* will call him, *Peter* is confident he shall be safe even in the *Sea*; *Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the Water*, saith he; and the *Lord* did but call him, and he went down and walked on the water safely: As if the swelling billows did only lift themselves to meet his steps, and raise him up from sinking. And when his own doubts, which alone could, were neer drowning him, and he but call'd the *Lord*; immediately he stretched out his hand and caught him: He answers his call, if we answer ours; if we obey when he says come, then will he come and save when we call to him. And so *Peter* receiv'd no hurt, but a rebuke; O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt? couldst thou imagin I would not sustain thee in the doing what I bid thee do? In answering my call? But why seek we experience of so old a date? There is a more encouraging miracle in these late calls themselves. Had God sustain'd the Order in its Offices and dignities amidst those waves that rack'd the Church of late, it had been prodigy of undeserved Compassion to our Nation: But whenas all was sunk, to bid the Sea give up what it had swallowed and consumed; this is more than to catch a sinking *Peter*, or to save a falling Church. The work of Resurrection is emphatically call'd the working of God's mighty power, and does out-sound that of his ordinary conservation. And truly 'twas almost as easie to imagination, how the scattered Atomes of mens dust should order themselves, and reunite; and close into one flesh; as that the parcels of our Discipline and Service that were lost in such a wild confusion, and the Offices buried in the rubbish of the demolisht Churches, should rise again in so much order and beauty. *Stantia non poterant testa probare Deum.* This calling of the Spirit is like that when the Spirit moved upon the face of the abyss; and call'd all things out of their no-seeds there; or like the call of the last Trump. Thus by the miraculous mercies of these calls God hath provided for our hopes, and warranted our faith of his protections! yet he hath also sent us more security, hath given us a *Constantine*, if his own be not a greater Name, and more deserving of the Church; for which (it is well known to some) he did contrive and order, when he could neither plot nor hope for his own Kingdom; and did with passion labour a succession in your Order, when he did not know how to lay designs for the Succession of himself or any of his Fathers house to his own Crown and Dignity. Nor is the secular arm all your security: God himself hath set yet more guards about his consecrated ones, he hath severe things for the violaters of them: *Moses*, the meekest man upon the Earth, that in his life was never angry, but once at the rebellions; seems very passionate in calling Vengeance on those that stir against these holy Offices. *Smite through the loins of all that rise against them, and of them that hate them, that they rise not again*: The loins (we know) are the nest of posterity; so that, strike through the loins, is, stab the succession, destroy at once all the posterity of them that

Math. 14. 28.

29.

31.

ibid.

Eph. 1. 19-20.

Num. 12. 3 ;
20, 10.

Deut. 33. 11.

that would cut off this *Tribe*, and hinder its *Succession*. Nor was this *Legal Spirit*; Gospel is as severe. Those in Saint *Jude* that despise these *Governours*, that do as *Corah* and his *Complices* did, (who gathered themselves against *Moses* and *Aaron*, and said, *You take too much upon you, ye Sons of Levi, since all the Congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them, wherefore then lift you up yourselves above the Congregation of the Lord?* words these that we are well acquainted with, and which it seems *St. Jude* looks on as sins under the Gospel :) these *perish in the gainsaying of Core*; whom *God* would not prepare for punishment by *death*, but he and his accomplices went *quick* into it: He would not let them stay to dye, but the *Lord made a new thing*, to shew his detestation of this sin, and the *Earth swallow'd it* in the *Commission*, and *all that were all'd and appertain'd to them* that had an hand in it. And truly they may well expect strange recompences, who do attempt so strange a *Sacrilege*, as to pull *stars* out of *Christ's own right hand*: From whence, we have his word, *that no man shall be able to pluck any*; but if they shine thence, on their *Orbs* below, and *convert many to righteousness*, their *light* shall blaze out into *glory*, and they shall ever dwell at *his right hand*: To which right hand *He that brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd and Bishop of the Sheep*, and set him there: He also bring you our *Pastors*, and us your *flock* with you; and set us with his *sheep on his right hand*. To whom with the same *Jesus* and the *Holy Ghost*, be ascribed all *blessing, honour, glory, and power, from henceforth for ever. Amen.*

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

HAMPTON-COURT

O N

The Twenty Ninth of *May* 1662.

Being the Anniversary of

His Sacred Majesties

Most happy Return.

B Y

RICHARD ALLESTRY D.D.

and Chaplain to His MAJESTY.

L O N D O N :

Printed by *John Playford*, in the Year 1683.

ARMY OF

THE UNITED STATES

OF THE

WESTERN ARMY

OF THE

WESTERN ARMY

OF THE



TO THE
Right Honourable
EDWARD

Earl of CLARENDON, Lord high
Chancellour of *England*, and Chan-
cellour of the *University of Oxford*.

My LORD,



O vouch your Lordships
commands for the publish-
ing this Discourse, I might
reasonably think, would
be to *libel your judgment*; and
the prefixing your *Name* to
it, and this mean address;
would look rather like *revenge* than *homage*
or *obedience*: If I did not know that *low per-*
formances are due to the transcendency of
such a *subject* as I then discours'd upon,

H h

and

The Epistle Dedicatory.

and such a Patron as I now Dedicate to: So I lie *prostrate* under my great Arguments, here *insufficiency* is Art and Rhetorick. And the truth is, My Lord, it was not this which made me so sollicitous to avoid your injunctions, but apprehensions of the unusefulness of the Discourse it self.

When God's most signal methods of all sorts do not seem to have wrought much conviction; when neither our own dismal guilts, nor miseries, nor most express miracles of deliverance have made us sensible, but after the equally stupendous Thirtieth of January and Twenty Ninth of May, and the black time that interven'd; we are still the same *perverse untractable* people; when *luxury* is the retribution made for *plenty*; *license* for *liberty*, and *Atheism* for *Religion*, whilst miracles of mercy are acknowledged only by *prodigies* of *ingrateful disobedience*: And on the other side, when *faction* humours swell against all Laws, as they would either *over-flow* those mounds, or make them *yield* and *give way* to them; when *Declarations* and *Decrees*, which *infallible* when they came only from a *party* of a *part* of a *Parliament*, are neither of *force* nor *esteem* when they have all *solemnity* and *obligation* that *just* and *full authority* can give; alas, what hopes of doing any thing can a weak Harangue entertain? But, My Lord, since

The Epistle Dedicatory.

since you are pleas'd to Command, I
give up both *it* and my *understanding* to
Your Lordship, and the weaker the Dis-
course is, so much the more pregnant
testimony is it of the *obsequiousness* of

My Lord,

Your Lordships most devoted

and most humble Servant;

RICH. ALLESTRY.

H h 2

SER.

My dear Sir,

I am very pleased to hear of your
up and down, and my intention to
visit you, and the weather is
very much to much the more pleasant
and it is of the effects of

Yours truly,

John Doughty Esq.

and wife in the Strand

Rich. A. A. A.

Elh a
SER-

SERMON XVII.

A T

HAMPTON-COURT

May 29. 1662.

HOSEA III. 5.

Afterward shall the Children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness.

HE had said in the words before, that the Children of Israel shall abide many days without a King and without a Prince, without a Sacrifice and without an Image or Altar, and without an Ephod and without Teraphims. Now when they shall have been for many years in such a state of helpless desolation, shall have no King under whose shadow they; their Laws and Rights, might hope for shelter; no Prince to guard them from the sad calamities of wild confusion or usurping violence; shall have no exercises of Religion to allay and soften those calamities, and give them comfort in the bearing of them; no Altar to lay hold on for security against them, or to stretch out their hands towards, for deprecation of them; no nor a God to put an end to this sad state; nor any means of direction what to do under it, no Ephod to ask Counsel at; nor yet the pageantry, the fallacy of these, no Teraphims for Ephods, nor Image for a God; the same destruction having seized these and their worshippers, the people and their Idols going into Captivity together, and the only true God having forsaken them: Now when the Prophet had denounc'd this state of Woe, which was to dwell with them so long as that their very expectations of deliverance should be dying, having continued threescore years and ten, a longer and more wearisome age of patience then life; he then proceeds to sweeten all by telling them of a return, and what things they shall do in it; and they are three.

First;

First, *Seek the Lord their God*, apply themselves to his Worship and Obedience, and cleave to him; for so the word is rendred *προσκύλλειν*, Lev. 19. 23. and *Jeremy* repeating this c. 30. 9. words it, *shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King.*

Which is the *second* thing they were to do. As the *Ecclesiastical* state was to be settled, so the *secular* too upon its just foundations, *Religion* and *Loyalty* both running in their ancient current.

Thirdly, *They shall fear the Lord and his goodness.* Not only tremble before him, who is the Lord, that did exert his power in their destruction; but shall much more revere his *goodness*, that did flow out in such plentiful miraculous expresses of deliverance.

Now these being not only *prophecy* what in that juncture they would do, nor only *duties* what they were to do, but also *counsels* and *directions* immediately from God what they were best to do, the only prudent and safe course according to the policies of heaven; the direct view of these particulars in reference to that state of theirs is not an unconcerning prospect at this season, which is the *Anniversary* of an equal return; and therefore I shall lay them so before you, and the reflection on them in our practice shall make the application.

1. *They shall seek the Lord their God* is my first part; and the Lord's prime direction for the repairing of a broken Nation. Neither indeed can any other course be taken; for 'till we have found him, while he does *hide his face*, nothing but *darkness* dwells upon the land; or if any *light* do break out, 'tis but the *kindlings* of his anger: So he expresses, *Deut. 32. 17. This people will forsake me and break my Covenant, then my anger shall be kindled against them, and I will forsake them, and hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not amongst us?* This absence is only another word for *desolation*: Be thou instructed, O *Jerusalem*, saith God by *Jeremy*, c. 6. 8. *lest my soul depart from thee, and I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited:* As if without him there were nothing else but solitude in Cities and in Courts, and all were desert where he does not dwell. Yea there is something beyond desolation, *Hos. 9. 11, 12. As for Ephraim, their glory shall flee away like a bird from the birth and from the womb, and from the Conception: though they bring up their Children, yet I will bereave them that there shall not be a man, יחס לאדם yea wo also to them when I depart from them.* And it must needs be so; for let our state be never so calamitous, if God be not departed, there is comfort in it, and a deliverer at hand: If we are in the place of Dragons, his presence will make heaven there; and although we be covered with the shadow of death, if the light of his Countenance break in, we are in glory; and the brightness of that will soon damp and shine out the fiery Trial. But if the Lord depart, then there is no redemption possible; *God hath forsaken him, persecute him and take him, for there is none to deliver him;* Psal. 71. 11. But if there were deliverance some other way, yet the want of God's presence is an evil, such as nothing in the whole world can make good: The presence of an *Angel* in his stead does not.

not. When the Lord said to Israel, *I will not go up in the midst of thee; but I will send an Angel with thee, and drive out the Amorite, the Hittite, &c. yet when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned, and man did put on his Ornaments*, Exod. 33. 4. Nay more, I shall not speak a contradiction if I shall say, that the most intimate presence of the Godhead does not supply God's absence; and such a small withdrawing of himself as may consist with being united hypostatically, was too much for him to bear, who was *Immanuel* when he complained God was not with him: I mean our *Saviour* on the Cross. He, who although he did beseech against his cup with fervencies that did breath out in heats of bloody sweat, with agonies of prayer, Luk. 22. 44. yet when he fell down under it, did cheerfully submit to it, saying, *Not my will, but thy will be done*; yet when God hides himself, he does expostulate with him, crying out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* His God could no more forsake him, than himself could be not himself: And yet the apprehension of that which could not be was even insufferable to him, to whom nothing could be insufferable.

Ver. 42.

Mat. 27. 45.

He seems to feel a very contradiction while he but seems to feel the want of the Lord's presence.

Such is the sad importance of God's not being with us; and this same instant tells us what drives him away. 'Twas *sin* that he withdrew from them: *Christ* did but take on him our guilt, and upon that the Lord forsook him: God could no more endure to behold wickedness in him, than the Sun could to see God suffer; Iniquity eclips'd them both, and sin did separate betwixt him and himself, and made that person who was God cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And it will do the same betwixt God and a people. *Isay. 59. 1, 2. Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.* His face is clothed with light, we know; but when Wickedness over-spreads a people, those deeds of darkness put out the light of his Countenance. His hand although it be not shortened, yet it contracts and shuts it self, not only to grasp and withhold his mercies from them, but to smite: Iniquity builds such a wall of separation as does shut out omnipresence, and makes him who is every where, not be with such a people; not be in hearing of their needs; for when their sins do cry, no prayers can be hearkned to; *he will not hear you*, saith the Prophet. And that gives us the very reason of the Lord's departure from a people, and the manner of it.

Mat. 27. 45.

He is taking away his peace and mercies from a Nation when he will hear no prayers for it; and he declares that he will hear no prayers when he withdraws once from his house of prayer, and makes his Offices to cease. The place appointed for these Offices, the Sanctuary, he calls, we know the Tabernacle of ^a meeting, that is, where he would ^b meet his votaries, and hear and bless them; calls it his ^c house; his ^d dwelling place, his Court, ^e presence, and his ^f throne: And if so, when he is not to be found in these, when he no longer dwells nor meets in them, we may be sure that he hath left the land. The Psalmist, when he does complain men had done evil in the Sanctuary, the adversaries roared in the midst of the Congregations, and

אהל מועד

Exod. 29.

42, 43.

Psal. 42. 4.

Psal. 74. 7.

Psal. 31. 20.

Jer. 17. 12.

Ex. 14. 21.

Psal. 74.

Ver. 3.

set

Psal. 4.

6.

Ver. 7.

Ver. 1.

2.

fit up their banners there for trophies; they broke down all the carved work thereof with axes and hammers, and had defiled the dwelling places of God's name even to the ground, and burnt up all the houses of God in the land; he does suppose that God was then departed when they had left him no abiding place: And therefore cries out, O God wherefore art thou absent from us so long? Remember Sion where thou hast dwelt. But 'tis not only upon these Analogies I build; this method of departure we shall finde exactly in Ezekiel's Vision of that case to which my Text refers: It begins ch. 9. 3. *And the glory of the God of Israel, (i. e. the shining cloud, the token of his presence in the Sanctuary,) went up from the Cherub whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house,* as going out; and then ver. 8. he does refuse to be entreated for the land: After that ch. 10. 18. *The glory went from off the threshold to the midst of the City;* and ch. 11. 23. it went from thence to the mountain without the City, and so away: And then nothing but desolation dwelt upon the land, untill the Counsel of my Text was followed, and they did seek the Lord their God: For then the glory did return into the Sanctuary just as it went away, as you may find it chap. 43.

And having seen when and how God forsakes a people, and for what, that does direct us how to seek him, and it is thus, When men forsake those paths in which they did not only err and go astray, but did walk contrary to God, so that they did forsake each other; and do return, walk in his ways, the ways of Commandments, and return also to his Church, and seek him in his house, fall low before his footstool, beg of him to meet in his tabernacle, renew his worship, and all invitations of him to return into his dwelling-place. For sure as it is in vain to seek him but in his own ways, nor can we hope to meet him but in his Tabernacle of meeting; so also Scripture calls both these to seek the Lord, and promises to both the finding him. To the first, Deut. 4. 29, 30. *If from thy tribulation thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient to his voice.* And the second, Jer. 29. 12. speaking of this sad state to which my Text relates, *Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me; and I will hearken unto you, and I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn away your Captivity.* I could produce you instances of Asa making all his people swear to seek the Lord: But because my Text speaks of David, he shall be the great explication, as he was the practice of this duty in both senses. In the former, 119. Psal. *I have sought thy Commandments above Gold or precious stone;* more than that which does make and does adorn my Crown, than that which furnishes all the necessities and all the pomps of Royalty. And for the other, Psal. 63. 1, 2. *O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is: To see thy power and thy glory, as I have seen the in the Sanctuary.* His very words do seem to labour too, and he does seek expressions to tell us how he seeks. The hot fits of a thirsty palate that call so oft and so impetuously are in his soul; it hath a pious fever, which cannot be allay'd but by pouring out of his soul to God in the Temple,

Temple, by breathing out its heats in his devotion Offices. Nay, more, he longs, hath that I know not whether appetite, or passion, which is not to be understood, but onely suffered; to which all the unreasonable violences which passion can be heated into, all the defaultances nature can be oppressed into, are natural; it is the bodie's Extasie. Now this he had towards the worship of the Sanctuary; his very flesh found rapture in those exercises, and when he was in a barren and dry land, was driven from the plenties of a Court, and from the glories of a throne into a desert solitude; he found no other wants but of God's house; did mind, pant, and long after nothing else; did neither thirst for his necessities, nor long for his own Crown, but for the Tabernacle only. And besides the Religion of this, he had reason of State too to be thus affected; this was the best means to engage his Subjects to him and secure his Throne. He knew, if by establishing God's worship, and by going with the multitude, as he did use, to the exercises of it; if by Royal Example and encouragements of vertue, and by discountenancing and chastising impiety, by doing as he did profess to do, *Psal. 101.* (that Directory for a Court) he could people his land with holy living, and his Temple with holy Worship; he knew he should then have good Subjects, Loyal to him and at peace with themselves. If they will seek their God, then they will seek their King. The Lord saw this dependence, and therefore counselled this course should be taken. The Master of our Politicks discerned it too, and therefore does advise that the first and chiefest publick cares should be about things of Religion, that and the same profession of it being *συνεκτικὸν ἀπάσης κοινότητος καὶ νομοθεσίας ἐπέσμομα*, the cement of Communities, and the very foundation of all legislative, and indeed all power in the Magistrate: And in the people *ἐπίτερον ἀνυμνήσασθαι καὶ δεσμὸς αὐτοῖς ἐννοίας*, 'tis a most efficacious philtre, a charm, a Gordian knot of kindness. And as a few observed of their own Nation, *τὸ γὰρ μίαν μὲν ἔχειν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν δεξάν περὶ θεῶν, καὶ τοῖς ἑτέροις μὴδὲν ἀλλήλων ἀγαφίαν, καὶ ἁλλοῖσιν ἐν ἑτέροις ἀνθρώπων συμπερίαν ὅτινα εἶναι*, To have one and the same opinions of God, and not to differ in their rites from one another; breeds the best harmony in mens affections. When on the other side no obligations, though the most signal and divine, will hold them in obedience and peace, if their ambitions or interests look another way: And if at any time present advantage, or an expectation, or some passion do encline them to seek David their King; yet the appearance of a change of Interest, that expectation defeated, or a cross animosity will burst those bonds, unless Religion and Communion in Worship help to twist them. David had had experience of this.

Abner knew of God's Oath to David that after Saul he should be King over all Israel; but he was otherwise concerned, and therefore he made Ishbosheth King, maintained a long and sore War even against what he knew God was engaged to bring about, and made himself strong for the house of Saul, 2 Sam. 2, 3, ch. But when a quarrel happened betwixt Ishbosheth and him, then, So do God to Abner and more also, except as the Lord hath sworn to David, even so I do to him, to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah. And he sent Messengers to him saying, Whose is the land? Make but thy league with me;

me, c. 3. 9, 10, 11, 12. Do but look forward, and you find when *Abner* was cut off, and *Ishbosheth* was slain, and *Israel* had no leader, then they came to David, saying, behold we are thy bone and thy flesh, and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people *Israel*, c. 5. 1, 2. They knew all that before, yet would not let him do it, 'till they had no other leader. Nay, when they had done that, by *Absalom's* insinuations: (who in a way of treacherous pitty did instill dislikes against the Government, and did remonstrate in good misbes, as some men do in prayers, c. 15. 3, 4.) they were all drawn into Rebellion against this *David*, and made him flee out of the land, and became Subjects to that *Absalom*. When he was dead indeed they speak of bringing back the King, c. 19. 10. and when his own *Judah* had done it, quarrell'd, ver. 43. because that their advice was not first had: And though *Judah* had nothing but their service, for, have we eaten at all of the Kings cost, or hath he given us any gift? say they, v. 42. yet *Israel* is angry, because he came not back upon their score, for they forsooth have ten parts in him, v. 43. and yet the next day every man of *Israel* went after him that said, we have no part in David, *Sheba* a man of Belial; ch. 20. 1. Thus no allegiance, no tie however sacred and divine will hold them who follow not upon God's score. Nay at the last, because that *Rehoboam* would not ease the Taxes, all *Israel* cry out, What portion have we in David? see to thine own house, David. And to make this secession perpetual (which all the former did not prove) *Jeroboam* did use no other policy, but to change the Worship and the Priests: He knew he should divide their hearts and Nations for ever; when he had altered once the Service and the Officers; and if he could but keep them from seeking God at *Jerusalem*, he was secure they would not seek David their King. And so it proved. Now the Lord to prevent divisions had provided so far for Uniformity in his Worship, that he required a single Unity; and that it might be but in one manner; he let it be but in one place.

1 Kings 12. 16.

And truly, when men once depart from Uniformity, what measures can they set themselves of changing? What shall confine or put shores to them? what Principle can they proceed upon which shall engage them to stay any where? And why may not divisions be as infinite as mens fancies? And though, when those are but in circumstantial things, those who are strong, and know them to be such, are no otherwise concerned to contend for them than on Authorities behalf, (to which every change is a Convulsion fit,) and on the account of decency, and of compliance with the universal Church: yet when others do dogmatize, and put conscience in the way doing them, and stand at such a distance from them as to chuse Schism, Disobedience, and Sedition rather, and therefore must needs look upon damnation in them; these differences make as great a gulf and chasm as that which does divide *Drives* from *Abraham's* bosom. It is one God, one Faith, one Worship makes hearts one. Hands lifted up together in the Temple they will joyn and clasp: And so Religion does fulfil its name à religando, binds Prince and Subjects all together; and they who thus do seek the Lord their God, will also seek David their King, God's next direction, and my second part.

Luke 16. 26.

2. And here three things offer themselves, *a King, their King, and David their King.*

I am not here to read a Lecture of State-policy upon a vie of Governments; why seek *a King*; not any other sort of Government; and why *their King*, one that already was so by the right of *Succession*, not whom *addressees* or *election* should make so. And though I think, 'twere easie to demonstrate only Monarchy had ever a *divine* or *natural* original, and that *elective Monarchy* is most *unsafe* and *burthensome*, full of dangerous and uneasie consequences; and this so much to fight, that choice for the most part bounds it self, proves but a ceremony of *Succession*: yet this I need not do, for I am dealing with the Jews, who had God's judgment in the case, and his appointment too; and to me that is argument enough. And when God hath declar'd, *for the transgressions of a land many are the Princes thereof*; many at once, as in a *Common-wealth*, or many *several families* successively, (for so God reckons also one or many; 'tis still; we see, *David their King*, while 'tis in *David's line*, and so the King does truly *never die*, while his race lives.) If either of these *many* be Gods punishment, for the sins of a land; I will not say that they who love the *many Princes* love the *transgressions* which God plagues so; but I will say, they who do chuse that which God calls his plague, that *quarrel* for his *vengeance*, and with great strife and hazard take his indignation by force, I can but pity them in their own opinions and enjoyments: But, *O my soul, enter not thou into their counsels.*

Prov. 28. 2.

^a R. Simeon the Son of Jochoi said,

בשלש
דברים
מחנך
ישראל
בניו
רחוק
במלכות
שמים
ובמלכות
בית דין
ובנים
חמקדש

^a and R. Simeon the Son of Menasiah said,

אין מרחץ
סוף נחילה
ישראל עד
שיחזור
ויבקשו
שלש

Deut. 33. 5.
Exod. 32. 1, 5.

As for *seeking their King*, I shall content my self with that which Calvin says upon the words; *Nam aliter verè & ex animo Deum querere non potuit, quin se etiam subiceret legitimo imperio cui subjectus erat*: For they could not otherwise truly and wish all their heart seek God, except they did subject themselves to his Government to whom they did of right belong as *Subjects*. And I shall add that they who do forsake *their King*, will soon forsake *their God*. The *Rabbines* say it more severely of *Israel* that they at once rejected three things, the *Kingdom of the house of David*, and the *Kingdom of Heaven*, and the *Sanctuary*. And truly, if we do consult that State from the beginning, we shall find that when they were *without their King*, they always were *without their God*.

Moses was the first King in *Jeshurun*, and he was only gone into the Mount for forty days, and they set up a *Golden Calf*; they make themselves a God if they want him whom the Lord makes so, as he does the Magistrate: If they have not a *Prince*, that *עין מלכות* *Dei*, living Image of God, then they must have an *Idol*. When *Moses* his next successor was dead, we read that the man *Micah* had an house of Gods, and consecrated one of his Sons to be his *Priest*: And truly he might make his *Priest* who made his *Deities*. And the account of this is given, in those days there was no King in *Israel*, *Jud. 17. 5, 6*. The very same is said, *ch. 18. 1.* to preface the Idolatry of the Tribe of *Dan*: There was no heir of restraint, as it is worded *ver. 7*. It seems, to curb impiety is the *Princes Inheritance*, which till it be suppress'd, he hath not what he is heir to. But Vice will know no Boundaries if there be no King, whose Sword is the only mound

and fence against it: for if we read on there, 19, 20, 21. ch. we shall find those dismal Tragedies of *Lust* and *War*, the one of which did sin to death the Levites wife; the other, besides 40000. slain of them who had a righteous cause, and whom God did bid fight, destroyed also a Tribe in Israel: These all sprang from the same occasion, for so the story closes it, *In those days there was no King in Israel*, ch. 21. 25.

Judg. 3. 7.
and ver. 12.

Ch. 4. 1.

Ch. 6. 1.

Ch. 10. 6.

Ch. 13. 1.

1 Kings 16.

26. Ch. 21.

22. & 22.

52. &c.

Just upon this; when God in their necessities did raise them Judges, that is, *Kings*, read all their story, you will find to almost every several Judge there did succeed a several Idolatry: God still complaining, *the Children of Israel did evil again after the death of such an one*, till he raised them another. Those 450. years being divided all betwixt their *Princes* and their *Idols*. After them *Jeroboam*, he that made the great secession of that people from their Prince, hath got no other Character from God but this, the *Man that did make Israel to sin*, at once against God and against their King. Yea upon this account they are reckon'd by God to sin after both their *Idolatry* and *State* were ended, when their *calves* and their *Kingdom* were destroyed. Ezek. 4. 4, 5. the Lord does bid the Prophet lie on his left side 390 days, to bear the iniquity of Israel according to the number of the years of their iniquity. But this was more than the years of their *State*, which were only 255, 390 years indeed there were betwixt the falling off of the Ten Tribes, and the destruction of *Jerusalem* by the King of *Babel*; but those ten Tribes were gone, their *Kingdom* perfectly destroy'd above 130 years before: But their *iniquity* was not, it seems, that does outlive their *State*, so long as that *God's Temple*, that *King's house* did stand from which they did divide. As if *Seditious men* and *Schismatics* sin longer than they are, even while those are whom they do sin against in separating from.

1 Sam. 2. 2.

'Tis true, there was an *Ahaz* and *Manasseh* in the house of *David*, but *Ezekiah* and *Josiah* did succeed. Mischiefs did not appear entail'd on *Monarchy*, as 'tis upon rebellion and having no King. It does appear their Kings were guards also to God and his Religion, the great defenders of his faith and worship. God and the Prince for the most part stood and fell together: Therefore St. Paul did afterwards advise to pray for Kings, that we might live in godliness and honesty; and still they were the same who sought the Lord their God, and David their King.

Ver. 35.

1 Sam. 12. 15.

But why *David their King*? For could his Kingdom disappear and be to seek; of whom the Lord had said, *I have sworn once by my Holiness, I will not fail David*? Psal. 89. And his Throne therefore was as sure as God is holy. But yet the Lord had said to the people of Israel, *If ye do wickedly, ye shall be destroyed both you and your King*. There are other sins besides *Rebellion* and *Treason* that murder Kings and Governments. Those that support their Ills by their dependencies, and use great shadows for a shelter to rapacity, oppression, or licences, or any crying wickedness; these prove Traitors to Majesty and themselves, strike at the root of that under which they took covert, fell that and crush themselves. National vices have all *Treason* in them, and every combination in such sins is a *Conspiracy*. If universal practice palliate them, we do not see their stain it may be,

be, think them slight; but their complexion is *purple*: *Common blood* is not deep enough to colour them, they die themselves in that that's *sacred*. Nay these do seem to spread contagion to God, as if they would not let the Lord be *holy*, nor suffer that to be which he swore by his holyness should be: For the *Psalmist* cries out, *Where are thy* Psal. 89. 49. *old loving kindneses which thou swarest unto David?* But sure some of God's Oaths will stand; if not those of his *kindness*, those will by which he swears the *ruine* of such sinners, and God that is *holy* will be *sanctified in judgment upon them*. Isa. 5. 16. Yea, upon more than the offenders; for the guilty themselves are not a sacrifice equal to such piacular offences. Innocent Majesty must bleed for them too; *If you do wickedly, you shall be destroy'd both you and your King*. Thus when God would remove Judah out of his sight, good *Josiah* must fall; and the same makes them be to seek David their King.

But how *David their King*, when 'twas *Zorobabel*? For with *Theodoret* and others I conclude he must be meant in the first literal importance of the words.

It was the custom of most Nations from some great eminent prince to name all the Succession, so at once to suggest his Excellencies to his followers, and to make his glory live. Now without doubt *David* was *Heroe* enough for this, and his valour alone sufficient to ground the like practice upon. And though we do not find that done, yet we do find his *piety* and his *uprightness* made the standard by which that of his Successors is meted. Of one 'tis said, *he walked in the ways of David his Father*, of another, *he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not like unto David his Father*. And because *David* went aside, and was *upright* with an *Exceptionation*, once therefore it is said, *The Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his Father David*. But besides this, his very name is given to two, *Zorobabel*, and the *Messiah*; both which were to be the restorers of their people: The one from *Sin* and *Hell*, to re-establish the *Kingdom of heaven* it self; the other to deliver his people from *Babel*, and to repair a *broken Nation* and *demolish'd Temple*. And for this work God bids them *seek David their King*. 2 Chro. 34. 2. 2 King. 14. 3.

The ways from *Babel* to *Jerusalem*, from the *Confusion* of a people Psal. 122. 3, 5. to a *City that is at unity in it self*, the *City of God* where he appears in perfect beauty, and where the throne of the house of *David* is, must be the first ways of *David*: In those he walk'd to *Sion*, and did invest his people in God's promises, the whole land of *Canaan*. In those *Zorobabel* brought them back to that land and *Sion*. And in these our *Messiah* leads us to *Mount Sion* that is above, to the *celestial Jerusalem*; does build an *universal Church* and *Heaven* it self. And all that have the like to do must walk in those first ways, fulfil that part of *David*, and must Copy *Christ*. Such the repairers of great breaches must be: These are the ways to settle Thrones, the only ways in which we may find the goodness of the Lord; which to *four* is the third direction, and my last part.

They

They shall fear the Lord and his goodness.

Psalm 130. 4.

3. That *Israel* who came but now out of the furnace should fear the Lord whose wrath did kindle it, whose justice they had found such a consuming fire as to make the Temple it self a Sacrifice, and the whole Nation a burnt-offering, is reasonable to expect: But when his goodness had repair'd all this, to require them to fear that, does seem hard. That that goodness which when it is once apprehended does commit a rape upon our faculties, and being tasted melts the heart, and causes dissolution of soul through swoons of complacency, that this should be received with dread and trembling, is most strange. Indeed the Psalmist says, *There is mercy with God that he may be feared*; for where there not, we should grow desperate: But how to fear those mercies is not easie. 'Tis true, when God made his goodness pass before *Moses*, shewed him the glory of it, as he says, in those most comfortable Attributes, the sight of which is beatifick Vision, *Exod. 34. 6, &c. The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; if that which follows there be part of it, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third or fourth Generation*; if this be one ray of the glory of goodness, if it dart out such beams, alas, 'tis as devouring as the lake of fire, his very goodness stabs whole successions at once, and the guilty may tremble at it for themselves and their posterity. But if those words do mean as we translate those very words, *Jer. 46. 28. I will not leave thee altogether unpunish'd, yet will not utterly cut off,* not make a full end of the guilty, when I visit Iniquities upon the Children, but will leave them a remnant still; then there is nothing dreadful in it, but those very visitations have kindness in them, and his rod comforts, and this issue of his goodness also is not terrible but lovely. To fear God's goodness therefore is to revere it, to entertain it with a pious astonishment, acknowledging themselves unworthy of the crums of it, especially not daring to provoke it by surfeiting, or by presuming on it, or by abusing it to serve ill ends, or any other than God sent it for, those of piety and obedience: Not to comply with which, is to defeat God's kindness, and the designs of it. If when they sought the Lord, he was found of them, and came to his dwelling place only to be forc'd thence again by their abominations; if when his goodness had restor'd all to them, they had *David their King* but to conspire against, an *Altar* onely to pollute, and a *Temple* to separate from, as *Manasses the Priest*, *Sanballat's son in-law*, with his accomplices did do; this were both to affront and to renounce that goodness, which above all things they must dread the doing: For if this be offended too, ruine is irreverfible; there is no other attribute in God a sinner can fly to with any hope. His Holiness cannot behold iniquity, his Justice speaks nothing but condemnation to guilt, his Power without kindness is but omnipotent destruction; but if we have his Goodness on our side, we have an Advocate in his own bosom that will bear up against the rest, for his mercy

mercy is over all his Attributes as well as Works: But if this also be exasperated, and kindness grow severe, there is no refuge in the Lord, no shadow of him to take Sanctuary under; for there is nothing to allay the *anger* of his *Compassion* and *Bounty*. This sure is the extreamest terrour, we are to dread his kindness *more* than his severity and wrath; we have an antidote, a buckler against these; but none against the other if it be provok'd; and if the heats of love take fire and rise into indignation, 'tis unquenchable flame and everlasting burning. Therefore when God hath done all things that he can do or they can wish, then most of all they must *fear the Lord and his goodness*.

My Text and I have spoke all this while to the *Jews*: Nor do I know whether I need to address any other way, all this did so directly point at us. The glories of *this day* need not the foil of those calamities from which this day redeem'd; to set them off; or you may read them in my *Prophet* here, and our own guilts will make too sad a Comment on his Text, who were more barbarous *Assyrians* to our selves. We also were *without a Prince and without Sacrifice*, had neither *King*, nor *Church*, nor *Offices*, because *we our selves* had destroy'd them, and that we might not have them had engag'd or covenanted against them; ty'd to our miseries so, that without perjury we could neither *be without them*, nor yet *have them*. As we had broke through all our sacred Oaths to *invade* and *usurp* calamity and guilt, so neither could we *repent* without breach of Vows, if this were not enough to make us *be without a God* too, then to drive him away we had *desil'd his dwelling places to the ground*, and by his ancient gifts of remove he was certainly gone. There was indeed exceeding much Religion among us; yet, God knows, almost none at all, while Christianity was crumbled into so many, so minute professions, that 'twas divided into little nothings, and even lost in a crowd of it self; while each man was a *Church*, every single professor was a whole *multitude of Sects*. And in this *tumult*, this *riot of faiths*, if the *Son of man* should have come, could he have found *any Faith in the Land*? Vertue was out of countenance and practice, while prosperous and happy Villany usurped its name; while Loyalty, and conscience of Oaths, and Duty were most unpardonable crimes, to which nothing but ruine was an equal punishment; and all those guilts that make the *last times perillous*, *Blasphemy*, *Disobedience*, *Truce-breakings* and *Treasons*, *Schisms* and *Rebellions*, with all their dismal consequences and appendages, (for these are not *single*, *personal crimes*, these have a *politick capacity*) all these did not onely walk in the dress of piety, and under holy Masks, but were themselves the very *form of Godliness*, by which 'twas constituted and distinguished, the *Signature* of a party of *Saints*, the *Constellation* of their *graces*: And on the other side, the detestation of such hypocrisy made others *Libertines* and *Atheists*; while seeing men such holy counterfeits, so violent in acting, and equally engag'd for every false Religion, made them conclude there was none true, or in earnest. And all this was because we were *without our King*; for 'twas the onely interest of all those *usurpations* that were, to contrive and preserve it thus. And when we had roll'd thus through every form
of

Judg. 5. 9.

of Government, *addrest* to each, mov'd every stone, and rais'd each stone to the top of the Mount, but every one still tumbled down again, and ours like *Sisyphus's* labour was like to have no end, onely restless and various Calamity; necessity then counsell'd us, and we applied to God's directions in the Text, I know not whether in his method, but it is plain we did *seek David our King*. And *my heart is towards the Governours of Israel, that offer'd themselves willingly among the people: Bless ye the Lord: Yea, Thou O Lord, bless them.* May all the blessings which *this* was the *birth-day* of, all that my Text encloses, all the *goodness of the Lord*, be the sure portion of them and their Families; may they *see the King in his beauty*, and *peace upon Israel*, and may their Names be blest in their Posterities for evermore. We sought him with the violent impatiencies of necessitous and furious desires, and our eyes, that had even fail'd with looking *for him*, did even fail with looking *on him*, as impotent and as unsatisfied in our fruitions as expectations; and he was entertain'd with as many tears as pray'd for; as one whom not our *Interests* alone, but our *guilts* had endear'd to us, and our tears: He was as necessary to us as *repentance*, as without whom it was impossible for us to repent and return from those impieties to him, of *usurping his rights*, of *exiling*, of *murthering him by wants*, because we could not do it by the *Axe or Sword*; without him 'twas impossible for us to give over the committing these; and the *tears* that did welcome him were one of our best *lavers* to wash off that blood that we had pull'd upon our selves. One endear'd also to us by God's most miraculous preservations of him for us: We cannot look upon his life but as the issue of prodigious bounty, snatch'd by immediate Providence out of the gaping jaws of tyrannous, usurping, murtherous malice, merely to *keep him for our needs*, and for *this day*: One whom God had train'd up and manag'd for us, just as he did prepare *David their King*, at *thirty* years of age to take possession of that *Crown* which God had given him by *Samuel* about *twelve* years before; and in those years to prepare him for *Canaan* by a *Wilderness*, to *harden him with discipline*, that so the luxuries and the effeminacies of a Court might not *emasculate and melt* him; by constant Watches, cares and business to make him equal for, habituated to, careful of, and affected with the business of a Kingdom; and by *constraining him to dwell in Mesek*, with Aliens to his Religion, to teach him to be constant to his *own*, and to *love Sion*. And hath he not prepared *our David* so for us? And we hope hath prepared for him too the *first days of David*, having no *Sheba* in the Field, nor *Achitophel* in the Council, nor an *Abiathar* in the Temple, not in that Temple which himself hath rais'd, God having made him instrument of that which he would not let *David* do, *building his house*, and *furnishing it with all its Offices*, and making it fit for God to *meet us in*, when we do *seek him* also, which was the other perquisite of our Condition.

2 Sam. 5. 4.

Inter 7 & 9.
Sauli qui re-
gnavit an. 20.
Vid. Sim.
Chron.

Psal. 120. 5.

There never was so much pretence of *seeking God* as in those late days of his absence from us; and it should seem indeed we knew not where to *find him*, we took such several ways to *seek him*. But if God did not look down from heaven then as he did *Psal. 14. to see*

See if any did understand and seek after God, should he not then have found it here as there? They are altogether gone out of the way; their throat is ^{Pfal. 14.} an open sepulcher, with their tongues have they deceived, the poison of ^{Rom. 3.} asps is under their lips, their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and unhappiness is in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes: They eat up my people as it were bread; and, which is worse in these than them, they even then call upon God; as if they craved a blessing from the Lord upon that meal that did devour his people, and when they did seek God, they meant to find a prey. Yet where were any others that did seek him? Or that do cleave to him now? The Schismatick does not seek God, who shuns the place where he appears, and meets, and dwells; nor does he cleave to God who tears himself off from the Lord's body. ^{Rom. 16. 17.} Mark such as cause divisions, saith S. Paul, and avoid them: and if all Christians must avoid them, then I am sure God is not with them. The other Schismaticks that divide from the World by cutting off the World from them; do they seek God that are diverted by so many Saints and Angels? that terminate divinest Worship in a creature? Or do they cleave to God, when their devotion embraceth stocks and stones? Or did they seek God for the purpose of my Text, who did not seek David their King, but did apply themselves to several foreign Princes, and to others which they hoped would set up their Golden Calf? Incendiaries, that make fires and raise commotions, these are farr from God; for the Lord ^{1 Kings 19.} was not in the fire, or in the Earth-quake, but in the still small voice, ^{11. 12.} in the soft whispers of peace and love. The Atheist, he that says in his heart there is no God, will not seek God, you may be sure; nor does he care to seek David his King, who is equally well under all Governments that will allow his Licences, and who hath no Religion to tie him to any. If he at all disliked the former, it was upon reasons of Burthen, or of Pride, or Libertinism: So much Religion, though counterfeit, was a reproach to him, and the face of such strictness was uneasie to him. These are so far from seeking God, that God says these did drive him out of Israel, Ezek. 9. 9. And then when that hath so long been the Wit, that it is now the Complexion of the Age, and they who thought fit to shew their not being Hypocrites by License, and (to give it an easie word) by drolery in sacred things, have now made nothing to be sacred to them; how shall the Lord dwell among such? They are enough to exercise God out of a Nation. The Hypocrite also, for all his Fasts and Prayers never did seek God, for he is but a whited Sepulcher, our ^{Matt. 2. 27.} Saviour says. Now who would seek the Living God among the dead? the Lord of Life sure is not to be found in Graves. Golgotha was a place to crucifie him in, not Worship him: He takes not in the Air of Funeral Vaults for Incense; it was a Demoniack that used to be among the Tombs. The subtle, false, and faithless men that walk in Mazes, never shall meet God: These are the windings and the tracts of the Old Serpent, and they lead only to his habitation. They that do climb as if they meant to find God on his own Throne, that follow Christ up to a pinnacle of the Temple, or to the top of that exceeding high Mount, whence they can over-look the glories

of the World, and pick and chuse, these do not go to seek Christ there: It is the Devil that does carry up thither, upon his own designs. Nor is it possible to seek the Lord in the ways that lead to the *strange Womans house*, for *her house is the way to hell*, Solomon says, (and he did know;), nay more, *her steps take hold on hell*, seize on those everlasting burnings which her foul heats kindle and begin. In a word, they that *seek their own*, that turn all merely to their advantage, they cannot seek God too, he will not be *joynt* God with *Mammon*. And then where are the men that sought him? That did retrieve him to us? Or with whom does he dwell? If he be not among us, we do in vain flatter our selves in our prosperity and peace, gawd it in all our bright appearances. Have we not seen the Sun rise with a glory of day about him, and mounting in his strength chase away all the little receptacles and recesses of the night, not leave a cloud to shelter the least reliicks of her darkness, or any spot to chequer or to fleck the countenance of day? When sturr a small handful of vapor rais'd by that Sun it self, did creep upon his face, and by little and little getting strength be-dast his shine, and pour'd out as full streams of storm as he had done of light; till it even put out the day, and shed a night upon the Earth in spight of him? So may prosperity it self, if the Lord and his blessing be not in it, raise that which will soon overcast and benight the most glorious condition of a Nation. That Wine which now makes your hearts glad, may prove like that which did commit the *Centaures* and the *Lapithæ*, first kindle *Lusts*, then *Wars*, and at last onely fill a *Cup of trembling and astonishment*; and that Oyl that does make you chearful countenances, may make your paths slippery, and nourish flames that will devour and ruine all.

But God, who is found of them that seek him not, nay who himself sought the lost sheep and carried him, when with his straying he was wearied into impossibility of a return, as also sought, and found, and brought together us and our great Shepherd: For *this is the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes*. These ways of his also are so past finding out, that we may well conclude they are the meer foot-steps of his incomprehensible goodness, and we have onely now to fear that goodness.

But give me leave to say, Those that despise his goodness, do not fear it; and they whom it does not lead to repentance, do despise it. S. Paul says, *Rom. 2. 4. Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-sufferance, not knowing that the goodness of the Lord leads thee to repentance?*

And now, O Lord, what sort of men among us hath thy goodness wrought upon, and made repent? Those whom it was directed to convince, and came on purpose to, to prove by their own onely argument they had of providential Miracles, they were not in the right, but that *destruction and misery were in their ways*; yet these chuse rather to deny their own conclusions, and resist Gods goodness, then to be convinced and repent: For we have seen them as bold *Martyrs* to their *Sin* as ever any to Religion, signalize their resolv'd impenitence with chearful suffering, as if the fire they were condemn'd to were that Triumphal Chariot, in which the Prophet mounted

mounted up to Heaven. Others that did not go so far in condemnation nor guilt as they, and therefore think they have no reason to repent of that, do they repent of what they did contribute to it? Of those that lifted up their hands to swear and fight, how many are there that have made them fall, and smite their own thigh, saying, *What have I done?* Do not all rather justify as far as they themselves proceeded? And if all that were well, why do not we repent of our Allegiance and Loyalty? If all that were well, what hath thy goodness done, O Lord, that hath reversed it all? And for the rest, those that do not partake the plenties of thy goodness, murmur and repine at it; are discontent at having what they pray'd for, what they would have died for. Those that have been partakers of it, have turned it into wantonness, have made it furnish them for base unworthy practices; such as have not the generosity of Vice, have not a noble, manly wickedness, are poltron sins; have made it raise a cry on the Faithfullest party, the best Cause, and the purest Church in the World. While we have debauched Gods own best Attribute, made his goodness procure for our most wicked or self-ends; and the face of things is so vicious in every order and degree and sex, that — But the *Confession* is onely fit for *Litanies*, and we have need to make the burthen of ours be, *Lord, give us some afflictions again*, send out thy *Indignation*, for we do fear thy goodness, it hath almost undone us; and truly, where it does not better, it is the most fearful of Gods Attributes or Plagues, for it does harden there. St. Paul says so in the forecited place; and Origen does prove this very thing did harden Pharaohs heart, indulgence was his induration. Now *induration* is the being put into Hell upon the Earth: There is the same *impenitence* in both, and *judgment* is pronounced already on the hardned, and the life they lead is, but the interval betwixt the *Sentence* and the *Execution*, and all their sunshine of *Prosperity*, is but kindled *Brimstone*, onely without the stench. And then to make the treasures of Gods bounty be *treasures of wrath to us!* to make his *kindness*, his *long-suffering*; that is St. Peter says, *salvation*, condemn us, his very *goodness* be Hell to us! But sure so great a goodness as this we have tasted, cannot have such deadly issues; and it was great indeed, so perfectly miraculous in such strange and continued successes, resisting our contrivances and our sins too, overcoming all opposition of our vices, and our own policies, that do not comport with it, and in despite of all still doing us good; it was *fatality of goodness*. Now sure that which is so victorious will not be worsted by us. But Oh! have we not reason so much more to fear the goodness? The greater and more undeserved it is, the more suspicious it is: As if it were the last blaze of the Candle of the Lord, when its light gasps; its flash of shine before it do go out, the *dying struggles* and *extream efforts* of goodness, to see if at the last any thing can be wrought by it. And if we did consider how some men manage the present goodness, make use of this time of it, and take, and catch, we would believe they did fear the departure of it: But yet it is in our power to fix it here. If we repent, Gods gifts then are without *repentance*, but one of us must change: Bring Piety and Vertue into countenance and fashion, and

Jer. 31. 19.

Rom. 2. 5.

2 Pet. 3. 15.

- Rom. 11. 22. God will dwell among us. Nay St. Paul says, *Goodness to thee if thou continue in his goodness*: If we our selves do not forsake it, and renounce it, not fear it so as to flie from it, but with the fears of sinking men, that catch and grasp, lay fast dead hold upon it, if,
- Jer. 32. 40. as God promises, *he so put his fear in our hearts, that we never depart from it, fear that hath love in it*, and is as *unitive* as that; then it shall never depart from us; but we shall see *the goodness of the Lord, in the Land of the Living*, and shall be taken thence to the eternal fulness of it. This day shall be the Birth-day of Immortal Life, the entering on a *Kingdom that cannot be moved*. A Crown thus beautified, is a *Crown of Glory* here, and shall add weight and splendor to the Crown hereafter: A Church thus furnished, is a *Church Triumphant* in this World, and such a Government is the *Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth*; and then we shall all reign with him who is the *King of Kings*, and who washed us in his Blood, to make us *Kings and Priests*, to God and his Father. To whom be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.
- Apoc. 1. 5, 6.

SERMON XVIII.
 AT
 CHRIST'S-CHURCH
 IN
 OXFORD
 ON
 ST STEVEN'S Day.

MATH. V. 44.

*But I say unto you, love your Enemies, bless them
 that curse you, do good to them that hate you,
 and pray for them that despitefully use you, and
 persecute you.*

I Need no Artifice to tie this Subject and this Day together.
 The Saint whose memory we celebrate was the *Martyr of this*
Text: And 'tis impossible to keep the Feast but by a resolution
 of obeying these Commands, you being call'd together on
 this day to beseech God to grant that you by the Example of this first
Martyr St. Stephen, who pray'd for his Murderers, may learn to love
your Enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute
you.

A strange command in an Age, in which we scarcely can find
 men that love their Friends, nor any thing but that which serves
 their interests or pleasures, that indeed love nothing but themselves;
 nor is it onely injury that works their hate and enmity, but difference
 in opinion divides hearts, and men are never to be reconcil'd that
 have not the same mind in every thing; as if one Heaven should
 not hold them that have not one judgment in all things, we see
 that one Church cannot hold them, and they that have but *one*
same God, one Redeemer and Saviour, one Holy Spirit of Supplication,
 cannot

cannot agree yet in *one Prayer* to him, though they have but *one same thing* to pray for to him: will not meet in their Worship because they do not in some Sentiments; and 'tis no wonder all *Christ's* reasonings and upbraidings, all the Advantages he does propose to them that love, the shames he casts on them that do not, by putting them out of his Train into the condemnation of Publicans; 'tis no wonder all this does not work with them whom their own sufferings and black Calamities will not convince. There is not one of us but knows that thus our miseries began but few years since, and yet we that have suffered for and by our Divisions, whose quarrels wounded the whole Nation and our selves, who have wept so much blood at once to vent and to bewail our differences, are still as full of the same animosities as ever, and want nothing but opportunity to confound all again *Religion and our selves*: And in the name of God what did *Christ* mean when he prescrib'd this Precept? when he disputed? prest it thus? or what do *Christians* mean when they do break and tear this Precept and themselves? Though I be far from any hopes to reconcile our Parties, (as by Gods help I shall ever be from making any,) yet I will offer an Expedient to make them not so noxious; namely, if they will keep the differences of their judgments from breaking out into their affections and actions. And though while meekness and obedience to Governours, and the whole constellation of Gospel-graces, do not seem to shine so fair as man's own reputation, or humor, or possibly some strict opinion which they have own'd, and the shew of holiness that glitters in it, while 'tis thus, I say, we cannot look any party will yield, all do or will believe themselves to be in the right; yet I will give them leave to think so, and my prescription shall concern them equally although they be; and by addressing my Discourse to them that are so really, I shall conclude more forcibly them that are not, who ere they be; for sure I am none can be more in the right than those whom *Christ* lays this injunction upon, than his *Disciples* and *Apostles* as relating to those that would be their Enemies as such: Yet 'tis to them he speaks here; *I say unto you, love your Enemies*, &c.

The words contain a *Duty* prescrib'd, and the *Authority* prescribing it: The Prescription and the Authority in these words, *I say unto you*, the Duty in the rest: where it is set down 1. in general: *Love your Enemies*, and that to be consider'd under a double prospect: 1. As it is plac'd in opposition to something that was before indulg'd the *Jews*, or presum'd so to be by them; signified here by the particle *But*; and then as it stands by it self, in its own positive importance: *Love your Enemies*. And Secondly, this Duty is particulariz'd in several exercises of the Act commanded, *Love*, in relation to several sorts of the Objects of that Act, *Enemies*: As 1. Those that curse you, you must bless: 2. Those that hate you, you must do good to: 3. Those that use you despitefully and persecute you, you must pray for.

These I shall treat of in their given order, beginning with the general Duty, and viewing that at once in both the lights that it doth stand in, that one may clear and fortifie the other. *But I say unto you, love your Enemies*.

Of all the Points of Christian Religion those which did most stagger the faith of some, and check their acceptation of it, or adherence to it, (saith *Marcellinus* writing to *St. Austin*) were these 3; The incarnation of our Lord; The meanness of his Miracles, which they thought the works of *Apollonius* equalld; and thirdly, the prescriptions in the Text. It seems they lookt upon these Duties as the mysteries of Practice; that spoke as loud a contradiction to their active principles and inclinations, as the other appear'd to do so, those of Speculation and Discourse; a God made flesh, and flesh and blood made so lame and passive, sweetned so; Being alike impossible to their belief: As if no flesh could certainly be so, except that of which God was made, and that *Word incarnate* onely could fulfill, these words here in my Text. They lookt upon this as a much more mighty work than any of his Miracles; as if 'twere easier to snatch one out of the arms of Fate from the embraces of the Grave, than to receive an enemy into ones own: As if *Christ* had done more when he pray'd for his Crucifiers then when he pray'd *Lazarus* out of his grave: For their Magicians, they say, vied Miracles with him, but none of their Religions or Gods did ever aim at this Prescription, *ut que sit propria bonitas nostra*; saith *Tertullian*; this being a sort of Piety peculiar to the Christians. Nor did they onely think it unpracticable, but unreasonable; as carrying opposition to all Government, to the Prosperity and Peace of every Polity; for he that does require that I shall have no return of injuries, but for a wrong, makes me in debt a kindness, not onely supersedes judiciary proceedings, but does secure Rapine by Law, and encourage it by reward; and truly if it were impossible for him that does affect a person to dislike his evil actions, and to desire he may have condigne punishment, such as by Gospel-measures may be satisfaction equal to his fault, and warning to himself and others, these men had reason: But if a Father can at once love and correct his Child; if when I am with indignation displeas'd at my offences against God, and by severities revenge them on my self, I do then love my self most passionately; and if I can pray with all the vigour of my soul for that false Traytor-bosom-enemy, my flesh, whilst it lies goading me to sin; and with temptation persecuting me to everlasting death; then no reason of State, or of my own requires I should not do all these acts of kindness to my Adversary. In that thou hast an exact pattern for thy enmity to them that wrong thee, and *thou shalt hate thine enemy as thy self*, is a most perfect Gospel-Rule: that being most consistent with and directive of this Duty, *love your enemies*. But yet there is so great a difference indeed betwixt this Act here and its object (Enemy being constituted such by enmity, that is aversion and hate) that love, and that seem strangely coupled, things that can be put together onely for a contest, just as heat and cold, to weaken one another, that both the love and enmity, may be refracted into a luke-warmness. Therefore I shall divide them, handling Love first by it self, viewing the import of that as it is sincere; lest the enemy appearing with it, make it shrink into a very slender Duty: and having done that, secondly, see whether an others enmity; and thirdly, whether enmity with that appropriation here, *your enemies*, can take off from the Obligation of that Duty, Love.

Now

Now Love shews fairest to our purposes in those dresses which S. Paul presents her in, 1 Cor. 1. 13. and 1. *Μακροθυμία* v. 4. and *ἀπαρρητιότης*; v. 5. it suffers long, if not the damage, yet the malice of repeated injuries, as knowing it is bound to forgive 'till 70 times 7 times: * Mat. 18. 22. And 'tis not easily provok'd, not apt for sudden violent heats, instantly all one fire, quick as lightning. Such heats are from another passion; which though sometimes they do but flash and die, yet oft they have their Thunder-bolt, and most what do fore-run a storm: whereas the heats of Charity are calm as sun-shine, such as do not consume, but cherish: For *χρηστικότητα*, in the same verse, Love is kind and gracious, full of humanity: This Vertue is a kind of universal friendship, hath nothing of reserv'd, morose or sour an humour, that makes solitude in the midst of Society, and makes men onely their own company, their Rule, and scope; and such a person Aristotle says must be either a God, who can enjoy nothing beside himself, is his own blessed and immortal entertainment, or a wild beast whose nature is unsociable because 'tis savage, whereas Love is a pious complaisance to all, 'tis condescension too; for *ἐκ ἀγκύρας* in the 5. v. does not think any thing unseemly, how contemptible soever, nor unworthy of him; so he may do his Neighbour good; he will debase himself to meanest Offices to work a real kindness. Thus Christ, because he lov'd his own, knowing the Father had given all things into his hand, he took a Towel, and girded himself, and put water in a Basin and wash'd his Disciples feet, making the lowest act of servitude be his Expression, and our Example: That is but slender Charity that will keep state, Heaven could not unite Majesty and Love: But to exercise this, God did descend from Glory into the extremity of Meanness. 'Tis Bowels that express compassion, and tender kindness: Now those we know of all parts of the Body are employed in the most low ignoble Office; and to such Love condescends, where 'tis true. Again, *πάντα σκεπτει*, it covers all; the naked with a garment, and the deformed, the leprous Sinner with a covering too; for *ἡ ἄγαπή καλύπτει τὴν multitudinem τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν*, hides his own wrong from his own eyes; this Love too like that in the Poets, cannot see, yea covers all that is not fit for light, suffers onely the graces to be naked near him, and not to name all, which you may find there, *πάντα πιστεύει*, ver. 7. believeth all things, however incompatible to love, and to be wise have been accounted, yet this Love is S. James his Wisdom that came down from Heaven, Cap. 3. 17. *ἐπιεικής*, apt to interpret any thing to the most favourable sense, and *εὐπειθής*, easie to be persuaded, still believes the best, and where it cannot, yet *ἐλπίζει πάντα* hopes the best: Affection while it lives cannot despair, for then it must deposite its desires, which are onely the warmth of Love, and 'till it die cool not, but if all do not answer hopes, yet *ἐκπορεύεται πάντα*, he does wait for it, is not discourag'd with relapses and the repetitions of injuries, but still expects, and suffers all the contradictions of spite and wrong?

Now if all these acts and the many other there are essential to Love and all be under Obligation; and S. Paul says there, they are so much Duty, that without these performances all Faith and all Graces profit nothing: the Preaching Rhetorick of Men and Angels would be nothing else but tinkling, and working Miracles, but shewing tricks.

It follows then these Acts must necessarily have a certain object, there must be some body that we are bound to love thus: And if that Object be our Neighbour (as that is most sure) 'tis clear my Neighbours injury, or hate or enmity to me; cannot take off nor yet diminish in the least that Obligation I have to all those Acts, but I must love him though he be mine enemy in every of those instances. For it is plain, his having wrong'd me does not make him cease to be my Neighbour; nay more, that enmity does formally dispose and qualifie my Neighbour for the Object of my love: And many of its Acts cannot relate but to a man that injures me; it must be in respect to *provocations* that love is said to cool into such a temper as *is not easily provokt*; For men are not provokt with kindnesses. I cannot suffer any thing but *wrong*, nor *suffer long* except there be *continuation* and *frequency* of wrongs. Nor is it possible I should *forgive* unless it be *offences* done against me. And so for divers of the rest: Now it were strange the enemy should supersede the obligation of that Duty, which cannot be a Duty but in order to an Enemy; that injury should give me a release, from doing that which I can never have cause or occasion to do but in the case of injury; that I should have leave not to obey the Command for that meer reason which alone makes it possible to obey it, and which alone makes the Command; Whereas indeed because I must needs love in these expresses, therefore he must needs be my enemy whom I must love.

But if he be without all provocation very unjustly so, if his hate be his sin, so that he hath offended God too in it, may I not then espouse Gods quarrel thus far, not to love his Enemy if I must mine own, not to love the injurious, the slauer? Vice certainly is the most hateful thing that is, and therefore it must needs render the subject not to be belov'd; accordingly 'tis said, that *the ungodly and his ungodliness are both alike hateful unto God*; Wis. 14. 9. and David does comply with God in this, *Psal. 139. Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? yea I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies*; And when I reflect on mine under this Notion, or if mine be such as set themselves against Religion and the peace and quietness of the Church, am I bound to love them? If so, then I may be allow'd to do it with a little regret sure. But yet if we consider how these in the Text are designated by that Appropriation, *your enemies*, which means those that hate you, *my Disciples*, those that in the last words of my Text, *will persecute you* even for your being mine; and yet those they are bid to love, we may conclude in the next place we may not hate our enemies as Sinners: Nor yet does enmity with God, his Church, or his Religion qualifie a person for our averiation or mischiefs. I except here *Apostacy* and utter *obduration* in it; a state that incapacitates for mercy, and by consequence for love and kindness. There is a sin which S. John would not say that we should pray for, and the Church thought that there was such a sinner, *Julian*, but as to less degrees; they that are suppos'd to persecute Disciples, and in doing so persecute Christ himself, may well be granted sinners, enemies to God and Christianity; but yet says he, *I say unto you, love these your enemies*. Tertullian understood this so, and writing to the Governour of Carthage, who threatned all the Christians of that Province with Excision, that he might persuade him

Verf. 21.22.

1 John 7. 16.

him from his purpose, thus began his Proposals: *We do not write as fearing for our selves, or dreading any thing that we are like to suffer, for we did enter our Religion on the condition of suffering, we covenanted to endure, and staked our lives when we began our profession; but 'tis for you we fear, for you our enemies, whom our Religion does command us to love and to do good to.* And though we must hate Vice, and do our best to root out Infidelity and Atheism, destroy Profaneness, Irreligion and Heresie and Schism: These are fit objects for the zeals of Hate, and for the feavers of our Passion, and if our enemies be such we may meetly endeavour they may have appropriate restraints, yet not to exercise the Acts of Charity and kindness to them we have no allowance: No sins can make it lawful for us to ruine, or not to do good to the Sinners. In fine the onely persons that the Jews pretended to have ground to hate were Enemies, and Enemies indeed to their Religion, the Idolatrous Gentile-world, therefore that being now forbid to us, there is no sort of men, nor any man whom it is lawful for a Christian not to love; and all the reasons urg'd here by our Saviour, do prove, that all mankind whether good or bad is the object of a Christians love: Because God does good to all, his methods of Mercies are universal; he makes his Clouds drop fatness even upon them that consume the encrease on their Lusts, and sacrifice it to their Riots, making their belly be their God: He gives abundance of his good things unto those that love them onely as they advantage Vanity and Sin, and that turn Gods store into provision for Vice and for Destruction. He gives gold to them that make gold their Idol, and bestows large portions of Earth on them that are Children of Hell, and them who for the pleasures of that Earth despise his Heaven. Yea, the whole order of things does teach us this, the Creatures do service to the whole kind, they acknowledge the man, and not the Countrey-man and Friend; but alike the rich and poor, the good and grateful, the wicked and ungrateful too. The Sun does not Collect his Rays and shed more day to gild the gaudy and gay person whose Cloaths and Jewels will reflect his light, return him as much almost as he sends, and vie brightness with him, than he does to the poor dark, fordid rags that even damp his beams: He sheds the same unpall'd day even on those men that draw such streams of bloud as with their mists endeavour to put out or stain his shine: The Ayre gives breath to them that putrifie it, as well as those that send it out a Perfume. Yea the Creatures of sense and perception do not yet discriminate their Lords, but with that same indifference serve all: *The Oxe knows his Owner, and the Ass his Master, not his Religion, nor his Versues;* and then as there is something in man, as man which God is kind to; something in man, as man for which the Creatures serve; so there is something in man, as he is man which we must love, and consequently we must love every man. And till thou hast found one so much a Monster that no Creature will fear or obey, and such a one as God will shew no kindness to at all, will not let his Sun shine, or his Rain rain upon, but while as others are in *Goshen*, sets him in the storm and dark of *Egypt*, till then, I say, thou hast not found a person whom thou mayst not love, no though he be
thine

thine enemy in mind, and thought, indeed, for if he *Curse* thee, thou must *bless*, and must *do good* to him which *hates* thee, which are the particular expresses of the love in the Text, the first of which is,

Bless them that Curse you.

Bless being here oppos'd to *Curse*, must signifie with well to them that wish you evil: Though *εὐλογεῖν*, also do import speak well of, as that is oppos'd to railing, 1 Pet. 3. 9. *not rendring railing for railing, τινος δὲ, εὐλογεῖτε, but contrariwise Blessing.* And both are the duty of this place, which does intend that all sorts of loving words should be the Christians returns to the offences of the tongue, whether by *Curse* or contumely. And truly when I do consider how the other way, the rendring like for like, and giving him that does wish or speak evil as good language as he brings, is so far from all shadow of compensation, that there is really a lots of honour in those dismal imprecating words, the anger that does belch them out, does swell and stretch and rack the passion, blushes at it self, the malice drinks those spirits up which it lurks in, and the envy that Snake, sucks all the blood away, leaves nothing but its own pale venom in the stead: In a word, the very Essence of impatience is vexation and fret; and then that men should call that recompence for suffering which is it self a present agony, and hath no prospect of any after-good, that they should satisfy themselves in that does make that bold assertion of the *Romanist*, who says that those in Hell do *will* and love their being there not strange at all, for indeed there is one and the same reason of both, that in the paroxysm of a passion, whensoever a man is seiz'd by an affection with violence (as they in Hell are always, and those that speak evil are for the present,) He does for that time love, cherish and pursue the affection: and in good earnest, if so be that men can please themselves in the extreme impatience of a fruitless choler, it looks like demonstration, that the damn'd may please themselves in their damnation; as to that part of it, that which tears the Soul, the rage of its own passions when they are loose and unmuzzel'd, and the more because we have good reason to believe theirs are the very passions we are now upon, *Envy*, and *Hate*, and *Shame*; and they do vent themselves in the same manner too, in *Blasphemy* and *Curses*; and suffer nothing, but that their's are endless, and then let such men please themselves in the returns of calumny and imprecations, we will allow them the delights of Hell in doing so, and they do tast those very onely satisfactions that the fiends do in their torments, and much good may they do them. 'Tis true then what the Psalmist says, *that he who thus delights in Cursing, it shall enter into his bowels like water, and like Oyl into his bones; like pleasure and refreshment, like water to allay his passionate heats, and Oyl to make him chearful after his vexation: For so indeed the venting of his Curses seems to do; but alas if to powre them out do make them enter into him, into his bowels and*

portion we do ours, *forgive as we forgive*, we ask no more, and praying so, we undertake to have endeavoured thus; assure God that we practise so, and upon that score beg. Now he that will forgive to the bounds of necessity, but never into favour, there he will stay his hand, will so much serve his turn from God? And can he be content with such a portion? Take heed, O severe man, what thou dost ask, when thou dost put up this petition. As thou shouldest say, I knew that notwithstanding we offend God constantly, yet besides all the mercies of his Covenant, (and that's a Covenant of Grace) his kindness too is over all his works; he does not only furnish our necessities, but serves our pleasures and our fancies, prevents us with the blessings of his goodness, and watches over us, and waits to be kind to us in the rescues of his providence, and beyond these gives us means of Salvation more than barely sufficient, the plenties of his grace, the five and ten Talents, the expresses of his temporal spiritual and eternal favours towards them that provoke him, are as immense and as innumerable as their guilts, but all these I shall rather part with, then be good and do favours to him that is mine Enemy: I will never have any kindness for that man that hates me, nor do I beg any of Thee, O Lord. And wouldest thou say all this to God, if it were put in words at length in thy petition? Or dost thou think thou dost not say as much in praying so? And thou that makest so ill requests for thy own self, how wilt thou pray for them that despitefully use thee and persecute thee? Which is the last particular command. *Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.*

As in this Character of Enemies, Christ hath not left out any thing that does express hostility, hating in heart, cursing in word, and persecution in deed, and which to some is more provoking than a persecution, despiteful usage: (For persecution may make them serious, and look at their demerits, the other only stirs their spleen and gall) all which, all that an enemy can speak, or wish, or do, must be no bar to our affection: So to express the unfeignedness of that, he hath not left out any exercise of Love, we must speak well of them, but that a crafty passion may do, and blessing may be but more plausible and cunning hatred: We must therefore also do good to them, but this a generous pride may do, as knowing it more glorious to raise up a distressed adversary, then to trample on him when he is down, and to make him my creature rather than my footstool: All this I may do therefore yet love nothing but my vanity or my designs: But when I take my Enemy into my Closet and into my heart; give him a share in the petitions of my soul, divide the aims and interests of my devotion to him, and make my prayers concern'd in the forgiveness of his sins as of my own, there's nothing but obedience to my Saviour, and the Love of my Enemy can make a man do this. And truly 'tis a piece of kindness that is as necessary for our selves, as those that injure us. For them it is very necessary for persecution, or despightful usage, offending God, as by a disobedience to his precept; so also by the sufferings it does inflict on man, to forgive or require which that man hath right: God does not use to put the injur'd person by this right, or by its paramount

Authority

• Act. 7. 60.
• Act. 9. 4.

Authority assume to pardon the mans part of the wrong, but does retain the sin till that either in deed or desire be satisfied for, or remitted, there being till then an obstruction to Gods forgiveness, for till then the man hath not repented; but when the sufferer does pray for him, in doing so he pleads that that obstruction is remov'd, that his part is remitted, and so leaves no bar in the way to that pardon which he begs for him of God, and which that bar being gone, the Lord is us'd to grant with all advantage, the prayers of our Martyr, in the seventh of the Acts, are a demonstration, to which the Fathers say the Church did owe not only her deliverance from all the violent intentions of *Saul*, but all that Christianity which *St. Paul* planted; the dying voice of that petition, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*, was answered by that *voice from Heaven*, which converted *Saul* in his career of fury: One prayer for a persecutor, puts an end to persecution, & *si Stephanus non orasset & Ecclesia non habuisset Paulum*. *Jobs* miserable comforters, whose visits prov'd afflictions to him, could not atone themselves to God by their burnt offerings, but *Job* must pray for them 42. Chr. 8. seven Bulls and seven Rams cannot expiate, but one petition from the sufferer will do it; for him I will accept, saith God, and he accepted him, not for them only, but for himself, for the Lord turned the Captivity of *Job*, when he prayed for them. vers. 10. These intercessions speed sooner then direct supplications, and such a petition is heard to our selves, when 'tis made for others. And reason good, for such requests lay the condition of our pardon before God, making evidence of our performance, and they cry, for we forgive, and so call for pardon. And to encourage this procedure, our Saviour before he did commend his own spirit into the hand of his Father, he commended his Executioners to the mercies of his Father: Our Martyr did not so indeed, but first pray'd for himself, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit*, Acts 7. 59. But though Heaven opening he saw that *Jesus* standing at the right hand of God, as ready to receive it, yet his Spirit would not leave his body so, yet made him live yet to endure more stoning from his persecutors, for whom he had not pray'd yet, but when he once fell on his knees, not beaten down by their storm, but his Charity, and pray'd, *Lord lay not this sin to their charge, when he had said so he fell asleep*, v. 60. his Spirit taken hence as it were *osculo pacis*, though by the most violent death, and he lies down in a perpetual rest and peace, that thus lies down in Love. These are requests to breath out a soul into heaven in, and heaven it self did open to receive that soul that came so wafted.

Luk. 23. 34. 46.

Mat. 5. 48.

And now we are at the top of *Christs Mount*, the highest and the steepest point of Christianity, which vies with that to which our Martyrs Spirit did ascend: For it makes perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect; it sets our heads within those higher and untroubled Regions, wherein there are no Meteor-fires, the flame of Passion cannot wing it thither, for he that is above the power of injury, discontent, cannot look up to him, it is with him as in the upper Orbs, where there is only harmony and shine, all is peace and love, the state of heaven it self. Now as it does happen to them that look down from great heights, every Object below is dwarf'd:

And

And if the distance of the prospect be as great as that from Heaven to Earth, they tell us this whole Globe would be but like a spot, all being swallowed in it self; so if from this great height of duty, we should look down upon the World of Christianity, would it not almost wholly disappear and vanish? Something like a dark spot of it you may perchance behold, stain'd and discolour'd with the Blood of Christians, which their constant quarrels shed: Some it may be dye that Blood in colours of Religion, their Animosity is christened Zeal, they kill only for Sacrifice, thus they interpret and fulfill Christs precepts, this they call holy love, as if Christ when he bid his Disciples *take no Scares with them*, meant they should carry *Swords*; as if the love he had commanded we should have for them that are in error (if our enemies be so indeed) were but to murder them forsooth out of their errors. Next for the kindnesses that Christians do to those that hate them, or have disoblig'd them, they are God knows so little, that no perspective can shew them from this height we are upon; And yet 'tis not for want of light we cannot see them, 'tis very rare men do those things in the dark; for if they do not blazon them themselves, the enemy whom they oblige, must do it. The distance also is too great to hear the prayers that are made for those that treat men with despicable usage; perhaps it is because they are put up in secret; but then what means the yelling of those curses? That ill Language that is banded to and fro? While none will be behind in the returns of these; how far soever we are off, like Thunder these are heard: And thence you may behold them also tearing Christs wounds wider to mouth their swelling passion: We may see their anger redden with his Blood, and themselves spitting out that Flood by imprecations at the face of him that did provoke them; we may see them raking Hell to word these prayers, sending themselves thither in wishes, that they may express them with more horror. The Hatreds and Revenges which men act on them that have offended them (hates that seldom ever dye 'till themselves do, which the Frost of the Grave onely cools, yea, many times they are rak'd up, and keep their heat in the ashes, live in the grave, and are as long liv'd as the families, which for the most part is more careful and tenacious of them than of their Inheritance.) The executions of these are often writ in Characters legible at utmost distance; in this Mount of the Lord they may be seen, but where now are the Christians of my Text and of this day? There's no appearance of them in the face of the whole Globe of our Profession; nay worse, it is scarce possible they should appear, the Duties of *loving enemies*, of *returning affronts with kindnesses*; these are banisht thence; other virtues are practis'd down, but these are scorn'd and quarrel'd down. 'Tis become a base thing and not to be endur'd to be a Christian in these instances: See pride and passions swoln up to an height, which Christs Mount cannot reach, and which he must not level by his precepts: For since he was not pleas'd to consider how inconsistent in this last age of the World his rules would be with those of honour, and in making his Laws, took no care of the reputation of a Gentleman, 'tis fit his Laws should give way to the constitutions of some *Hellors*, and he must

must bear the violation of them : And all this must be reasonable too. Good God ! what prodigy of age is this, when Christ the Lord cannot be competent to judge either of right, of honour, or of reason ? When to be *like God*, and to be *perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect*, is to be most sordid and unworthy of a Gentleman ? and in the name of God these men that are too great for virtue, that brave out Religion, and will needs give rules to God, what rank do they intend to stand in at Gods Judgment seat on the last day ? Lord God ! grant us to stand among the meek, on that hand with the sheep, and those that are too poor in spirit to defy their enemies and thy commands : for however the meek maketh himself a prey, and is so far from enjoying the promise of inheriting the Earth, that the virtue is scarce allow'd to sojourn in the Earth, as if it had breath'd it's last in this our Martyrs prayer, took it's flight with his spirit, and those stones that slew him were the Monument of loving enemies, of praying for those that persecute and murder ; and such Charity were not to be found among us any more, yet sure I am these Charitable persons shall enjoy the friendship and the glories of that Lover, that did Bless, do good to, Pray, and Dye for Enemies ; and these meek men shall reign with the Lamb, who was slain, and is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, all which be ascribed to him, and to the Father of all mercies, the God of Consolation, and to the Spirit of Love, now and for evermore.

Rev. 5. 12.

FINIS.



1

THE
Divine Authority
AND
USEFULNESS
OF THE
Holy Scripture
ASSERTED IN A
SERMON

On the 2 Tim. 3. 15.

*And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures,
which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through
faith which is in Christ Jesus.*



HE words are part of St. Pauls reasoning, by which he presseth *Timothy* to hold fast the truth he had receiv'd, and not let evil men, seducers, work him out of what he had bin taught: urging to this end both the authority of the Teacher himself, who had secur'd the truth of his doctrine by infallible evidence; and beyond that, as if that were a more effectual enforcement, pressing him with his own education in the Scriptures; how he had bin nurs'd up in that faith, suckt the Religion with his milk, that it was grown the very habit of his mind, that which would strengthen him into a perfect man in Christ, and make him *wise unto salvation* if he did continue in the faith and practice of it; which he proves in the remaining verses of the Chapter.

In the words read there are three things observable.

1. Here is a state suppos'd, *Salvation*; and put too as of such concernment, that attaining it is lookt upon as wisdom; *wise unto salvation*.

Now since true wisdom must express it self both in the end that it proposeth, and the means it chooseth for that end to be pursued with and attain'd by, and take care both these have all conditions that can justify the undertaking, and secure the prudence of it, and this wisdom to salvation therefore must suppose both these; in order to them both we have here

2. That which with all divine advantage does propose this end, and also does prescribe most perfect means for the attaining it;

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and

* John 10.
30, 31.

and that is *Holy Scripture through faith which is in Christ Jesus*. *Thou hast known the holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus*. *Holy Scripture* probably of the Old Testament; for there was hardly any other *Timothy* could know from a child, scarce any other being written then. The faith of that then through the *faith which is in Christ Jesus*, that is, together with the faith of all things necessary to be known concerning Christ, is meant. Now since *St. John*, after the view of all that the other three Evangelists had wrote concerning Christ, adding his story also says, that Christ ** did and spoke more than what is written*, yet affirms most positively that *those things were written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing might have life through his name*; and so enough is written for that faith which is in Jesus that is necessary to eternal life: therefore the *Holy Scripture* of the Old Testament, together with the faith of what is written in the New, is that which *St. Paul* affirms is *able to make us wise unto Salvation*.

3. Here is the advantage *Timothy* had above others as to Faith in these, and consequently the far greater obligation to continue in it. *He had known them from a child. And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scripture, &c.*

The first thing that doth offer it self to our consideration is the state suppos'd, *Salvation*. But because my Text supposes it, I shall do so too, nor shall think it needful to prove here, that there is such a state, nor consequently that all those are stupid who propose not to themselves this everlasting safety for their main end, and by strict care in the duties of Religion and Gods service aime at it: for if that state be granted, nay if it be but possible, it must be granted, that there can be no security but in doing so, nor consequently any wisdom without being *wise thus unto salvation*.

But then if this were granted, that the wisest thing man could propose to himself, were by strict care in all the duties of Religion to design Gods honor and his own salvation; still, as to the other part of prudence which consists in the choice of means, we are to seek for that Religion we are to pursue this end by and attain it; since there are so many and so opposite Religions in the world, that tis not easier to reconcile them, then to make peace between enemies and contradictions. And it alwaies was so; for excepting that mankind agreed still in the notion of the necessity of Religion, that all had apprehensions of invisible powers above us, and differ'd not much in the rules of Justice and Morality, in other things there was no nearness. Almost from the beginning there was more variety of Gods then Nations, I had almost said then Worshippers. Beasts were their sacrifices and their Deities, and therefore their Votaries were certainly no better. Vices also were their worships; things which their Cities and their Camps would not endure, found Sanctuary in their Temples; and the actions which were whipt in the Judgment-hall, were their piety in the holy places. And tho some wise men among them found good reason to decry this, yet they knew not what to take up in the stead. I need not add the present differences of the world, even that call'd Christian too,
great

Sabbath eve, to keep off such cares from the day of their Religion, they gather'd double which ^b corrupted not: How when they mutined for flesh, would have variety, Paradise in the desert, such great plenty of ⁱ Quails flew to them as fed the whole Nation till their very lust was surfeited; and they had no more will then hunger to them; How *Moses* Rod did strike a living stream, a River that suffic'd that people and their cattle out of a ^k Rock: How in the midst of lightning and thunder God himself promulgated his Law ^l to the whole Nation audibly at once: How his glorious presence shew'd it self in all necessities upon the Ark, in which the Tables of the Law were laid up: How the waters of the river ^m *Jordan* fled from that Ark both waies, flow'd upwards to give passage to the people into *Canaan*: How the walls of ⁿ *Jericho* without any other battery, any other force but that the Ark was there, fell down before it.

^b Exod. 16.
24.

ⁱ Num. 11. 16.
20. 31. 32.

^k Num. 20. 8.
11.

^l Exod. 20.

^m Josh. 6. 20.

ⁿ Josh. 6. 20.

But to name no more, If these be true; that power by which these were wrought, was great enough to give that Law, require obedience to it, and reward it, and to punish all transgression according to the tenor of these Scriptures: that is, it was God; and he that wrote those Scriptures must have had communication with, and bin inspir'd from, God to write them. But,

2. whether they were true or no according as they are recorded in those Scriptures, that whole people from the greatest almost to the least must know; because they are recorded as all don, not only in the presence of them all, but as the objects and the entertainments of their senses, every one; so that if they were forg'd, not one of the whole Nation could be ignorant of it. And then,

^e Num. 2. 32.
Num. 11. 21.

3. If they knew them forg'd all; that ^o 600000. men, besides their wives and families, should endure this *Moses*, having brought them forth only into a wilderness, there to lay such a heavy Law, and so severe a yoke upon them, with such penalties annex to every least transgression, and adjure them to observe it on account of all those prodigies that had bin wrought among them, and upbraid them with stiffneckedness, rebellion, and appeal to their own senses for the truth of all this, and record all to posterity in this Scripture, cause all to be read before them; and that they should bear all this from him they knew so impudent a deceiver, and convey that Scripture and the faith of it to their posterity, ground their so strict, so chargeable Religion on that book, which they were certain had no word of truth in it: this sure transcends belief and possibility.

Tis certain therefore, since the Jews of that age did perform the services requir'd, and in performing them according as that book directs, did teach their children the great works that God had don in their sight, therefore they believ'd those Miracles and Scriptures. And since it was impossible that they should be deceiv'd; if they believ'd them, they were true: & their posterity receiv'd from them the faith of this, and so deriv'd it on, that neither Gods dread judgments, nor mans cruelty can yet shake it. Now had they not bin don, and on that account convey'd; when ever they were broacht, and that book first appeard, the men of that age must needs know their Fathers never had perform'd such services, had such a book read to them constantly,

constantly, nor told them of such Miracles that had bin wrought : and therefore it was impossible that they could have believ'd it had bin so from *Moses*, if it had bin true that it had first begun to be taught in their own time, or in theirs with whom they liv'd. And this discourse must be of force concerning every age, if we ascend until we come to that of *Moses* wherein all was effected. Yet besides this, they had also that perpetual Miracle in the High Priests Pectoral, the Oracle of *Urim* and *Thummim*, that did keep alive their faith and strengthen it : and they had Prophets constantly foretelling, as from God, things that were sometimes suddenly to come to pass, and sometimes not till many ages after, the event of which depended often on the will of those that would not of some hundred years be born; others on Gods own immediat will and hand: and therefore none but God could look into, foretel, and bring to pass all those events. Now such were *Jeremies* predictions of the taking of *Jerusalem*, and the captivity of the people, and the expresse number of ^p years it would continue ; *Esays* naming ^q *Cyrus*, who was to ^p release it, near two hundred years e're he was born ; All *Daniels* prophecies, particularly that must eminent one of the ^r *Messiah* this *Christ Jesus*, of whose Scriptures we are next to speak.

That that *Jesus*, whom *Cornelius Tacitus* the heathen historian in the fifteenth book of his *Annals*, calls *Christiani dogmatis autorem*, the ^t Author of the Christian Doctrine, did work Miracles, and prophesy, both ^u Jews and learned ^v Heathens do confess. But these Books tell us, when he first began to preach, he publicly cast out a Devil in the Synagogue on the Sabbath day ; and at even, when the whole City was assembled, he heal'd all their sick, and cast out many Devils, which confess before all, that *he was the Son of * God*. Then he cast out a Legion of such mischievous malign Spirits, as having got license, drove two thousand Swine headlong into the Sea and choakt them, which was known to the whole Country of the ^y *Gadarens*. Before the Pharisees and Doctors, that came out of all the Cities both of *Galilee*, and *Jewry*, and *Jerusalem*, and so great a crowd as forc'd them to unroof the house to come to him, he freed one from his ^z palsy and his sins. A multitude was witness of the death of ^a *Fairus's* daughter, and bewailing her laught him to scorn that undertook to raise her, yet he call'd her into life. And on a feast day in the Temple, before all the people, he recover'd one that had lain lame ^b eight and thirty years : and when a widows son was carried to his funeral, and all the City follow'd him, he only toucht the bier, and bid him ^c live. With two fishes and five loaves he fed ^d 5000 men besides women and children, and with what they left they fill'd twelve baskets, when one basket carried all before they ate ; so that they were convinc'd, he was that Prophet that was to come into the world : and with seven loaves he fill'd ^e 4000 afterwards and seven baskets. He commanded a dumb spirit out of him that had bin ^f *Lunatic*, vext with a Devil from his infancy, before the people and the Scribes, whom his Disciples could not cast out. And when ^g *Lazarus* had bin dead four daies, and buried till he stank, yet at his call, altho bound hand and foot with grave cloaths, he

^p Jer. 25. 11,
12.
^q Isa. 44. 26.
21. 28. & 45.
1:
^r Dan. 9. 24.
&c.

^s Tac. An. l. 15.
^t Vid. Raim.
Martin. pug.
fid. p. 2. c. 8.
^u Celsus apud
Orig. l. 2. Ju-
lian. Cyril. con-
tra ipsum 6.
^v Orig. n. contra
Cels. l. 2. c. 69.
^w Mat. 8. Mar.
1. Luc. 4.

^y Mat. 8. Mar.
5. Luc. 8.

^z Mat. 9. Mar.
2. Luc. 5.
^a Mar. 5.
Luc. 8.

^b John 5.

^c Luc. 7.
^d Mar. 14.
Mar. 6.
Luc. 9.
John 6.

^e Mat. 15.
Mar. 8.
^f Mat. 17.
Mar. 9.
Luc. 9.

^g John 11.

h Mat. 24.
Mar. 13.
Luc. 21.
i Mat. 26.
Mar. 14.
John 12.
k Mat. 27.
Mar. 15.
Luc. 23.
John 19.

l Phlegon apud
Origen. contra
Cels. l. 2. p. 80.
Euseb. ad Olym.
202 ann. 4th bi
top. & Georg.
Synkel Thallus
apud African.
vid. Scal. ani-
mad. ad Euseb.
Chron. p. 186.
ad ann. 2044.
Etiam vide
Just. Mart. p.
76. & p. 84.
& Tertull. A-
pol. c. 21. & de
isto terræ motu
agere Tacitum
& Plin. l. 2.
c. 84. scribit
Oros.
m Mat. 28.
Mar. 16.
Luc. 29.
John 24.
n Mar. 16. 9.
o Luc. 24. 5.
p V. 33.
q V. 13.
r V. 16, 37, 41.
s John 20. 24.
t John 21.
u Mat. 28. 16.
Mar. 15. 6.
x 1 Cor. 15. 7.
y Luc. 24. 49.
z Acts 1. 9.
Luc. 24. 51.
a Acts 2. 6, 7, 8.

came forth, all the multitude beholding. From so many more I chose out these, because they are reported don before the people, and the Scribes, and Pharisees, and Doctors. I might name his^b Prophecies of the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and of the propagation and continuance of his Religion; even of the womans box ofⁱ Spikenard, which event hath made notorious to the world. But his death was so even at the present: when if the rending of the^k veil of the Temple was apparent Miracle to all *Jerusalem*, the suns prodigious Eclipse, when it was impossible by nature he should be eclips'd (it being then full moon,) was so to the whole Hemisphere. It serves the use I am to make of this, that 'tis here recorded, but withal Heathen^l Historians and Chronologes bear witness to it: for when they relate that in the 4th year of the 202 Olympiad, the year that is assign'd to *Christ's* death, there was such a great Eclipse as never had bin, day at noon turn'd into night, the stars appearing, and earthquakes as far as *Bythynia*, since 'tis apparent by the motions of the Heavens and the calculations of Astronomy, there could be none such then according to the course of nature, it must be this the Gospel speaks of. But beyond all this, 'tis registred here, that according as he had foretold, he rais'd himself from death the^m 3^d day; yea and many bodies of the Saints that had bin buried, long it may be some of them, he rais'd with him. That notwithstanding all the art and treachery of the Chief Priests to conceal it, yet that very day he appear'dⁿ First to Mary Magdalen, ^o 2^{dly} the Women, 3^{dly} Peter, 4^{thly} to them that went to^p Emaus, last of all on that day to the eleven^r except Thomas, being seen and handled by and eating with them; 6^{thly} eight daies after to the same eleven with^s Thomas; 7^{thly} at the sea of^t Galilee appearing in a miracle of fishes; 8^{thly} to all his Disciples and^u 500 Brethren more in Galilee, then to James, ^x then to all his Apostles, promising them the^y Holy Ghost; and lastly all of them beholding he^z ascended into Heaven, and ten daies after as he promised sent the^a Holy Ghost upon them in the shape of fiery tongues, so as that they spoke all Languages immediatly, to the amazement of the Jews of every Nation under Heaven to which they were scatter'd, that the Miracle might spread as far.

Now if all this be true, he that did these must have communication with a power above all that we account the powers of Nature; such an one most certainly as can perform whatsoever he in this book promises, inflict what e're he threatens; such as is Divine. And since he wrought all these, on purpose to evince he came commission'd from that Divine power, brought these Miracles as seals of that commission, that we might believe him, therefore whatsoever he delivers must be embrac'd by us, as we hope for those blessed rewards that he proposeth, and on pain of those eternal torments if we do not; of both which it is not possible to doubt if these accounts be true.

2^{dly}. Since the most and greatest of these must be don but once; he could not be incarnated, and born, and live, and preach, and dye, and rise again, and go to Heaven every day, of every age, in every

every place, to convince every man by his own senses; to all those that did not see the matter of fact, therefore faith of all these must be made by witnesses. And

3^{dly}. If we can be sure the witnesses that do assert a fact understand it exactly, if the things be palpable, and they must certainly know whether they were really don or no; and if we can be sure too, that they are sincere, will not affirm that which they do not know, and do not lye, their testimony of it must be most infallible: because it is impossible such witnesses can be deceiv'd, or will deceive.

4^{thly}. The witnesses in this case, the Apostles and the 70 Disciples (for I'll name no more) must needs know most perfectly: for they not only saw the Miracles, but were ^b instruments & parties in some ^b Luc. 1. 14 of them; sent to cure diseases, cast out Devils, and knew whether all this were in earnest. And most certainly they saw (as all the Jews did too) Christ crucified, his heart pierc'd with a spear, and his body buried; and whether they did see him risen, handle him, eat with him they knew. And if they might mistake in his Ascension, yet the fiery tongues, if such did light on them, they must needs see; and whether they themselves, who spoke no Languages, could then speak Tongues, it cannot be but they must know. In these there is no possibility they could err, unless they did it wilfully: but then 'tis as impossible that they could do it wilfully, if they were sincere and honest, such as would not lye.

Now that they were such, I might urge their simplicity and openness, without disguise, not covering their own errors; men who seem'd to live as well as preach against all artifice, and to have no design on any thing but the amendment and salvation of mankind. For he that can suppose it possible that they were otherwise, men of art and finess, that they contriv'd the story, must needs know; First, that such would not seal their falsehood with their blood; design no recompense to all their travels but contempt, and hatred, persecutions, prisons, whippings, wounds and death, to be the scum and the off-scouring of the world; lay out their lives against their conscience to preach that *Jesus*, who did only call them out to be a ^c *spectacle to all the world*, just such as Malefactors when ex- ^c 1 Cor. 4. 9 pos'd to fight with, and to be devour'd of wild beasts. Their sufferings are too known to stay upon: *S^t Pauls* own catalogue of his for five whole verses 2 Cor. 11. is such, that to sustain them only for this end, to put a cheat on mankind; count a so laborious, vexed, torn, miserable life and an infamous death gain, so the fable might be believ'd: to think they could do this, is sure as great a madness as to do it. But yet I will suppose that possible; that those who wove the fable pleas'd themselves so infinitely with the expectations of imposing on mankind, as that those hopes could make misery and death it self look lovely to them. But

Then 2^{dly} that all and every of them should be of that mind, that amongst so many that bare witness of Christs Miracles and resurrection not a man should discover the cheat; that when their persecutors did with arts of torment as it were examin them upon the rack, they should work not one single confession out of them; that no ones courage should be broke, nor have a qualm so far as
to

to acknowledg how it was, disclose the plot, lay open the confederacy, the whole mystery and the contrivance of it: When of twelve Disciples one was so false to betray his Masters person at a vile rate, yet that all of them, and many more, in a feign'd story of his Miracles should be so true to one another, that no engin of mans cruelty ever could screw out the secret, not one should betray the forgery and be a *Judas* where he ought to be: no not that *Judas*, whose concern it was, whose treason to his Master had bin justified had he bin an impostor: yet that he should stir no least suspicion of it, but should burst, choakt with his greif because he had betray'd innocent blood: This, if he knew it had all bin imposture, must be most stupendous.

But yet we will give them this too, that vainglorious hopes of drawing in the world to follow them, might make all of them obstinate in secrecy against all attemts of cruelty; or if some weak brethren did perchance discover, we may not have heard of it. But

For them 3^{dly} to begin their preaching at *Jerusalem* is yet more strange. To hope to draw men into a perswasion, and to bottom that perswasion upon Miracles, and a Resurrection don amongst them there; where if discovery were made it must be made, and where it could not but be made if there were fraud. For to relate and write those works with every circumstance of persons, place, and time, where they not only could examin every circumstance, but where they rather then their lives would find them false, if nothing else would, this must needs discover it. They preach them to the face of the whole multitude and of the *Pharisees*, and tell them they were don before their eyes, sometimes 500 and sometimes 5000 being by and the *chief Preists* and *Pharisees* and *Doctors*: so that 'twas most impossible they should not know if they were true or false, as sure as there was never a Jew in all the Land, but knew whether there were a darkness over all the land when Christ was crucified. Now if these were forg'd to hope to draw *Jews* out of their Religion with apparent forgeries, which they knew such, speaks these Apostles men so far from art to manage a design of changing the Religion of the world, that they were mad beyond recovery and president.

But let us give them that too. Yet 'tis certain 4^{thly} that the *Jews*, if any such were wrought on by them, must be much more stupid to believe them upon the account of such things don in all the country, in their Cities, and the Temple, before all the Nation, when they could not choose but know they were not don, if they were not don, but were fain'd all. For what ever might be motive to Christs Followers and his Apostles, with the certain danger of their lives to forge the cheat, what possible temptation could there be so great to incline *Jews*, the most stiffnecked people, the most stubborn in Religion in the world, to embrace a faith which nothing but the Cross and shame and misery attended, and which they must know false too? Had they so great lust to dye, as for that to bid farewell to their *Moses*, their Religion and their Law? It is impossible had they not known the truth of those things, that in waters of affliction, in *Jerusalem*, *ipsis persecutionum fontibus*,

fontibus, in that fountain, that spring-head of persecutions, as the Fathers call it, they would ever have bin baptiz'd into Christ.

Yet suddenly in one day at one sermon of S^t Peter we read near 3000 were baptiz'd *Acts* 2. at another strait 5000 *Acts* 4. and such beginnings, such sums are requir'd to make good what the Governor of Palestine ^d *Tiberianus* tells the Emperor, that he was not sufficient to put to death all those that confest themselves Christians. All which must needs have either bin convinc't those things were true, or else as well against their conscience as against the powers, thus embrac't that faith and death together.

Neither was this a first surprize of Christianity, as it had seiz'd mens minds at unawares; for it went on conquering till the world came into it, receiving the Religion with the loss of all that was dear to them in this world. For in one age from Christs death, what with the Apostles sermons, miracles, and ^e writings also to confirm and keep men in the truth, and to convey it better to posterity, and their Disciples after them, who went forth ^f delivering those writings, preaching on, and doing wonders also, very many Nations are recorded by Historians as converted almost wholly. And the truth of it is evident, since nothing but almost whole Nations, nor yet they but as buoy'd up by the wonders and the graces of Gods spirit, ever could be able to endure, or be sufficient to employ the Swords, the Flames, the Lions, and the other numberless tortures which the *Jews* and *Nero* and *Domitian*, and above all *Trajan* in that first age rag'd with, till they made their Cities, villages and provinces so desolate, that the Proconsul *Pliny*, being frightened with the multitude of murder'd Christians, did advise with him about relaxing his edicts, as he himself ^g assures us.

It was the same the next age, when the power of Miracles ^h yet liv'd, and those which Christ himself wrought were scarce all dead, (some ⁱ liv'd till near that time, who rose up with him at his resurrection;) when these ^k books, (writ by the will of God to be the pillar and foundation of mens faith in after ages, as saith ^l *Irenaeus* in that age,) were also read in the assemblies weekly; when not only those that did assemble were by ^m *Hadrian* martyr'd, but they put men to their oaths, to find out whether they were Christians, that they might massacre them.

And in the third it was the like, when Miracles they say were not ⁿ yet ceast, yet sure the greatest was the constancy of Christians in adhering to this book and patience in suffering for it. For they report the ^o sands on the sea shore almost as easy to be numbred as the Martyrs of that age; what by ^p *Valerian*, *Decius*, *Maximinus* and *Severus*, but especially by ^q *Dioclesian*, who put so many men to death for not delivering up their Bibles to be burnt, and refusing to Sacrifice to his Gods, as if he meant to have depopulated the whole earth. And this is as notorious as that men do now pro-

d Ως οὐκ ἴκανοί
καὶ λοιποὶ τῶν
Χριστιανῶν Φο-
βούμενοι. *Suidas in*
voce Tiberianus.

e Whence *Eusebius* says *l. 2. Eccl. hist. c. 14.* they at Rome not thinking it enough to have heard the Gospel once μὴ δὲ τῇ ἑξῆς φησὶ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον διδασκαλία, not being contented with the preaching of the heavenly doctrine while it was but an unwritten doctrine, earnestly entreat S^t Mark, that he would leave in writing with them a monument of that doctrine which had bin delivered to them by preaching. Nor did they give over till they had prevail'd; which when S^t Peter knew by revelation of the H. G. ἡ θεία ραφή τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι being extremely pleas'd with that desire and their earnestness in it, He approv'd it, and appointed it to be read in their assembly. *f* *Euseb.*

l. 3. c. 37. g l. 10. epist. 97. h Just. Mart. dial. cum Tryph. Judeo p. 247, 302, 311. Iren. l. 2. c. 56, 57. i Excerpt. ex Quadrat. Apolog. ad Hadrianum apud Euseb. l. 4. c. 3. k Just. Mart. Apol. 2. p. 98. l Iren. l. 3. c. 1. m Just. Mart. Apol. 2. Eccl. Smyrnenf. apud Euseb. l. 4. c. 15. Ecclesiarum Viennen. & Lugdun. comment. de passione Martyr. suorum apud Euseb. l. 5. c. 1. & Niceph. l. 3. & 4. n Orig. contra Cels. l. 2. p. 62. & p. 80. Tertul. Apol. c. 23. o Niceph. l. 5. c. 29. p V. Euseb. l. 6. & 7. fere integros de Sev. Spartian. & Tertul. de Decio S. Cypr. q Euseb. l. 8. c. 2. c. 6. Niceph. l. 7. c. 6. Euseb. l. 8. c. 11. & c. 9. Sulp. Sev. l. 2. Oros. l. 7. c. 25. Ignatii Patr. Antioch. literas apud Scalig. de emend. temp. l. 5. p. 496. Spond. ad annum 302. n. 4.

fels that they are Christians, and that these are holy Scriptures. Therefore I shall need to go no further.

Now among so many myriads who on the account of all these Miracles (whate're they were) suffer'd themselves to be converted to the faith of Christ, and then as if they car'd for nothing but Religion and their Bibles, for them bore the loss of goods, and life it self, and engag'd their posterity to do so also; that not one of these should know whether indeed any such miracles were wrought, if any were restor'd to life or no: (for if they knew, then they were true:) and that among so numberless a crowd of teachers, who by assuming to speak languages, raise the dead, work signs, drew in those Myriads to Religion and the stake, and went before them, gave them an example both in faith and death; that not one of all those should believe either the Miracles or himself that did them: for if any one that did them did believe them, since he knew who did them, they must needs be certain: but not one of them to know it, sure is such a thing as neither could be don nor be imagin'd.

He therefore that requires strict evidence in things of faith which cannot bear it, he that calls for Mathematical demonstration, nor will believe on easier terms, yet is so credulous and so unwary, that he can believe so many things which by the nature and the disposition of mankind I have demonstrated not possible, which yet must be true, unless these Scriptures be from God: 'tis plain he does not seek for certainty, but for a pretence of not believing; would fain have his Infidelity and Atheism look more excusable, and is not fit to be disputed with but to be exploded.

Luke 1. 4.

But if these Scriptures be from God, then whatsoever they affirm (with modesty I may conclude) is true. And therefore when *S^t Luke Acts 1. 1.* declares his former treatise contain'd all that *Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which he was taken up:* since Christ before he did ascend taught every thing that was requir'd to be believ'd and don in order to salvation, and more too; therefore if his Gospel did contain all that he taught, and did, since it did not contain all absolutely, it must needs mean it contained all that was necessary, or it must mean nothing. And since the same *S^t Luke* in the beginning of that Gospel does affirm he wrot it, that *Theophilus might know the certainty of those things wherein he had bin instructed;* 'Tis plain he avers that the certain knowledg of all those things wherein the having bin instructed made *Theophilus* a Christian, might be had out of the Gospel: and when *S^t Paul* says here, that *the Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus,* and *S^t John* in his 20 chap. v. 31. that *tho he had not wrot all the things that Jesus did, yet those that he had wrot were written, that we might believe that Jesus was the Christ the son of God, and that believing we might have life through his name;* 'Tis evident the Scriptures say that what was written was sufficient to work that belief which was sufficient to life and salvation, as far as the *credenda* do concur to it. And when *S^t Paul* in that verse that succeeds my text, in most express particular words sets down the usefulness of Scripture in each several duty of a man
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of God, or Preacher of the Gospel, both for *Doctrine* of faith, for *reproof* or *correction* of manners, and *instruction* into *righteousness*, and tells you Gods expresse end in inspiring it, and consequently its ability when so inspir'd was, *that the man of God might be made perfect*, throughly furnish'd unto every good work that belongs to his whole office; 'tis most certain that what is sufficient for that office to *instruct*, *reprove*, *correct* and *teach* in, must needs be sufficient to *believe* and *practise* in for all men: *i. e.* what my text affirms, they are able to make us wise unto salvation.

I might call in Tradition universal to bear witness to this truth for holy Scriptures, if having once demonstrated that they are Gods word, when that does affirm it, and bears witness to it, there were need of any other. And this I dare boldly say, that if the Scripture did say as expressly, that the Pope had a supremacy or sovereignty over the whole Church, or that he or the Roman Church were infallible; their definition, or the living voice of their present Church, a most sure rule of faith, as it doth say Scripture *is able to make us wise unto salvation*, those Articles would suffer no dispute, it would be blasphemy or sacrileg to limit or explain them by distinctions, when those sayings of the perfectness of Scriptures are forc'd to bear many. Then we should have no complaints of the obscurity of those books; if those articles were either in the Greek or Hebrew, they would never say the Bible were not fit to be a Rule of Faith, because the Language were unknown to the unlearned, and they could not be infallibly secure of the Translation; were they there they would account them sure enough, who think them plain enough already there, and that we must believe them because, *Thou art Peter, Feed my sheep*, and *Tell the Church*, are there.

And for him that shall affirm, all necessities that must make us *wise unto salvation* are not in the Scripture, 'tis impossible to give a rational account how it should come to pass that some are there, the rest are not.

It must be either on design, or else by chance. Now 1. That God should design, when very many things that were not necessary were to be written, that the main and fundamental ones should be omitted: and when of the necessities most he did design for Scripture, then He should not suffer the Apostles to write the remainder of them: and yet what he would not suffer them to write, design'd that the Trent Fathers (who I hope have perfected the Catalogue) should write all: of these since 'tis not possible to give a reason, 'tis not therefore rational to affirm it was upon design. But

2. If he shall say it only happen'd so by chance, he does affront both Scriptures and Gods Holy Spirit, who, as they affirm, inspir'd them for this very end, to bring men to the faith and to salvation. But there is no place for chance in those things that are done in order to an end, by the design, impulse and motion of the infinit wisdom of Gods Holy Spirit. He certainly does most unworthily reproach his Maker, who can think it possible, that what he did design expressly and on that account alone to attain such an

end by (namely that men should believe and be sav'd) and inspire it for that purpose, should yet fail, not be sufficient for that purpose. And sure if it be sufficient it contains all necessaries, otherwise it were deficient in the main; yea so clearly also, as that they, for whose salvation they are intended, may with use of such methods, as are obvious and agreed upon by all men, understand them: for otherwise they could not be sufficient: if men could not be instructed by them in things necessary both to faith and life, they could not *make them wise unto salvation*.

I must confess the Scripture labors under a great prejudice against this doctrine, from the different sense and interpretations that are made of it, even in the most fundamental points, by them that grant it is the word of God; when yet all use the same means to find out the meaning, and no doubt they seek sincerely after it. But yet I think it evident this happens not from the obscurity of Scripture, since it is not only in the most express texts; but also if you should suppose the doctrines were as plain set down there as words can express them, yet there are such principles assum'd into the faith of different sects, as must oblige them to interpret diversly the same plain words. I am not so vain as to imagin that no places are obscure in Scripture, and I know that learned men have arts by obscure places to confound the plainest, just as the Philosopher did motion. Neither am I so perverse and singular not to think that universal practise and profession of the Church does much assure and confirm explications of Scriptures, whether obscure or plain. But this I say, that the diversities of explication come, as I now said, from the diversity of principles or rather prejudices, and that this only is the cause of it I thus demonstrate.

First in the *Socinian*, who interprets all those Scriptures, which the Catholic world hath still apply'd to the Divinity and satisfaction of Christ, that I name no more points, otherwise then the Church did alway; and I affirm he does it, not because he thinks the words do favor his interpretation, but because his principle requires it; namely this, To admit nothing into his faith but what agrees with that which he counts reason, which in a *Socinians* faith is judg of all points in the last resort. And I mean reason upon natural principles, and thus I prove it. *Socinus* speaking of Christ's satisfaction, says the word is not in Scripture, 'yet if it were there very often I would not believe it, because it does not consist with right reason, that is, with the arguments that he had brought against it drawn from human principles. And therefore he there adds; those things which 'tis apparent cannot be, (*i. e.* that appear such to him who judges by the principles of natural reason, which yet cannot judg of supernatural and infinite beings,) tho the Holy Scripture does expressly say they are, yet must not be admitted; & *idcirco sacra verba in alium sensum quam ipsa sonant per inusitatos etiam tropos quandoque explicantur*: and for this reason we make use of even unusual tropes, strain'd figures to explain the words of Holy writ to other senses then the words themselves import. And so he therefore serves that great variety of words by which the Scripture does express Christ's suffering for our sins, in our stead, as our sacrifice;

Ego qui etiam si non semel sed saepe id in sacris mentis scriptum extaret, non idcirco tamen ita rem prorsus se habere crediderem. Socin. de Jesu Chr. Salvatore parte 3. c. 6. operum tom. 2. p. 204.

crifice; against the universal notions of those words, not only which the Church of Christ, but which the Jews and which the heathen world had of them. And when his reason told him that Christ could not be *God one with his Father*, that he was so far from having any being from eternity, as that he was not at all, till he had a being from the Blessed Virgin; Therefore when the Scripture saies directly *I and the Father are one*, he must strain it to this meaning, are of one mind, we agree in one: altho St John avert that, by distinguishing those two expressly. Yea worse, when to prove that Christ had a being e're the world was made, we urge from the first Chap. to the *Hebr.* what St Paul produces from the *Psalms*, and does apply to him most particularly. *Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth and the Heavens are the works of thine hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as does a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.* They explain thus: that God by Christ will at last destroy these Heavens, and this Earth, and change them, according to that saying in the *Psalms*; which altho the Apostle produce at length, as it stood there, both concerning the *Creation* and *destruction* of the world, yet he intended only to apply this last to Christ. And tho he say as well of the same Lord, *Thou Lord in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands, as, thou shalt change them*; yet he meant no more but that this change God would effect by Christ. It is not possible that the text can give any the least countenance to this interpretation. The different explication of this Scripture does not come from the obscurity of any words in it; for in the *Psalms* they and we understand the same words in the same sense exactly: therefore that we differ here, is not from any thing in the words quoted, but is wholly from the Principle. And we may not wonder, for the plain sense will not sute with their Hypothesis.

There are no other that are instanc'd in as differing from us in points of faith but the Romanist. I know not whether they account those differences to be in things necessary to salvation. If that be true that they allow (for what cause they know best,) some that are reconcil'd to their Church to communicate with ours, that is, join in our worship, and by doing so own the profession of our faith in distinction to that of others, or at least espouse the scandal of the owning it; Then one would think they must account that there is nothing in our worship don that is unlawful, nor omitted that is necessary, nor any thing Heretical profess'd, at least that there's no scandal in the owning that profession. For if there were, they did allow them only to profess and act gross sin, which certainly they would not do. So that poor Protestants when they are pleas'd to give leave may be no Heretics, and therefore there is nothing of it self in that profession faulty. But yet on the other side since we see they call us Heretics, and when they have no power over us, damn us to Hell fires, and when they have had power, damn'd us to the fire and fagot also; sure they think the differences to be in things necessary. But yet the account is easy, how not the

f John 10. 30.

t 1 John 5. 7. The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. 8. The Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one.

u Heb. 1. 10, 11, 12. x Psal. 102. 25, 26, 27.

y The reasonableness of this supposition might be demonstrated if there were any need of it.

obscurity of Scripture, but a Principle or prejudice does cause this. For we are bound in conscience to grant they believe their own Principles. Now 'tis a Principle with them, that their Church cannot erre, and therefore that their present faith and consequent depending practice was their faith and practice alwaies. That it may appear so, they must seek for countenance from Scripture: and if any thing there seem to thwart their faith or practice, they must smooth and disguise it, that it may look friendly. And 'tis most certain if the Scripture should be never so expresse against them, whilst they think it is not possible that they can err, they cannot think it possible Scripture can mean what it pretends to speak. 'Twere easy to make instances. As first for invocation of the Saints departed, which with them is a point of faith, ² *Bellar.* and *Cochleus* produce that of the Psalms, *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.* Psalm 121. 1. and altho the text directs that looking up expressly to the Lord that made heaven and earth. v. 2. and tho it be a Principle with them, that on those everlasting hills there were no Saints in *Dauids* time that could be invocated, they were all in *limbo* then they say; yet as I said, they would have countenance from Scripture, and for want of better they are therefore forc'd to interpret those words, *I will lift up mine eyes unto the Hills*, thus, *I will invoke* the Saints. Now will any say 'tis the obscurity of this Scripture that does hinder Protestants from seeing the bright evidence of this argument, and not rather that it is the weak foundation of this practice that does make the Romanists seek to build it on those mountains? So among those several texts which in the 2^d Nicen general Council are produc't for adoration of the images of Christ and of the Saints, and are expounded to evince it, none is plainer then that which I produced now from *Bellarmin.* I shall give one or two examples from the Psalms: ^a *Thy face, Lord, will I seek:* and, ^b *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us:* and again, ^c *the rich among the people shall entreat thy face:* therefore David thought the picture of Christ was to be ador'd. It is their own ^d conclusion from these texts, and they have no better for it. Yet they saw the doctrine in these so apparently, as that with great opposition to great Councils, and more blood-shed I think then yet ever any doctrine hath bin settled with, it was impos'd. Yea more, the first experiment of the Popes power over Sovereign Princes was on the account of this same doctrine: when for opposing Image-worship *Gregory* the 2^d excommunicated the Greek Emperour. Pope ^e *Constantine* for the same cause indeed had 14 years before don so to *Philippicus*, but he did not go much further, whereas *Gregory* absolv'd the Emperors subjects in the Roman Dutchy from their Allegiance; commanded them not to pay him any tribute, nor in any wise obey him; whereupon they ^f kill'd their Governors, and ^g swore obedience to the Pope. And this was the beginning of S^r Peters patrimony, and it was thus gotten by this doctrine, which they saw so cleerly in these Scriptures;

² *T. A. de Sancti. Beati. c. 17.*

^a Psal. 27. 8.

^b Psal. 4. 6.

^c Psal. 45. 12.

^d Concil. 10m. 18. p. 255.

^e *Sigon. de regno Ital. ad annum 712. l. 3. p. 94.*

^f *Sigon. de regno Ital. ad annum 726. l. 3. p. 103.*

^g *Leoni imperium respuerunt, ac solenni*

sacramento se Pontificis vitam statumque in perpetuum defensuros, atque ejus in omnibus rebus auctoritati obtemperaturos jurarunt. Ita Roma Romanusque Ducatus à Græcis ad Romanum Pontificem pervenit. Sigon. de regno Ital. ad annum 727. l. 3. p. 105.

when

when they cannot see the contrary in those plain words, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any whether Graven image* or idol it matters not, since it follows, *nor the likeness of any thing which is heaven above*, &c. nor in those where God takes care expressly that himself be not worshipt by an image *Deut. 4. 15.* and then judg if 'tis obscurity or plainness that makes them see or not see doctrines in the Scripture: rather if it be not meerly the necessity of prejudice. So again we differ in the meaning of the 14th chap. of the 1. of *Cor.* where we think *S^t Paul* asserts and argues, yea and chides against all service in an unknown tongue in the public assemblies saying all must be don there so as it may be ^h understood, and to edification. But that which is perform'd there in an unknown tongue does not ⁱ edify says he there: yet to justify this practice they must make it have a different meaning, which no Fathers countenance, but which ^k several expound as we do, yea and diverse of their own do so too, particularly their Pope ^l *John* 8th in his 247th Epistle writing expressly on that Subject. Once more, so their half communion, that it may be reconcil'd with that express command ^m *Drink yee all of it: and this do*, obliges them to find another meaning: *drink yee all* must be directed to them only as Apostles; and *do this* must signify consecrate the Elements, altho *S^t Paul* apply it most directly to the drinking, and the drinking to his lay Corinthians. Nor dare they say in truth it means the other, for ⁿ *S^t Paul* when he does say *do this*, did not intend to make his *Lay Corinthians* male and female all ^o priests, and give them power to consecrate. The words are plain, there's nothing in the text obscure that makes us differ, but the practice had by little and little grown upon them, till it became Universal, and so grew into their faith: and then since they believe they cannot erre, they must expound *Christ's* words so as they may not contradict their practice; because that would overthrow their Principle.

But the Church that builds upon no Principle but Gods word, can have no temptation to pervert or strain it, since what ever does appear to be the meaning of it, that their Principle must needs engage them to believe. And therefore if it say *This is my body*, we believe it; if it saies too after consecration it is ^p bread, we believe that also: and because it therefore says 'tis both, we so believe it one that it may be the other: which since both say it is impossible that it can be substantially, neither hath God in express words told us which it is substantially; therefore seeing when he calls it *body*, he is instituting his *Sacrament*, there's all reason in the world he should mean *Sacramentally*; since 'tis the most proper meaning: and by consequence 'tis bread *substantially*, as all waies of judging in the world assure us. Here's no stress on Scripture, as there is no Principle to serve; when as the other makes us differ, not in Scripture only, even where 'tis plainest; but tradition too. For the most express and evident sayings of the primitive Fathers are on every head of difference, as much the matter of contention as the texts of

^h 1 Cor. 1. 5.
12. 19. 26.
ⁱ V. 6. 14. 16.
17.

^k *Basil. Mag.*
in reg. brevior.
interrog. 278.
Tom. 2. p. 641.
Theodor. & Oecumen. in locum
&c. and the
Commentary
under *S^t Ambrose's* name
makes these
who in the
Church of *Corinth*
would
use an unknown
tongue
in their sacred
offices, (against
whom
S^t Paul directs
his speech, &
takes occasion
for that
which he saies
in this chap.)
converted
Hebrews; who
would it
should seem
perform the
service or at
least some
parts of it in
the Christian
Assemblies, as
they had bin
don of old in
the Synagogues,
in the
Hebrew
tongue, which
the *Corinthians*
understood
not, against
which
S^t Paul disputes.

^l *Conc. tom. 24.*
p. 287. m *Mat.*

^{26. 27.} n 1 Cor. 11. 25. o Yet the Council of Trent Sess. 22. c. 9. Can. 2. pronounces Anathema to all those that shall say those words do this, quoting them also in the margin out of this place 1 Cor. 11. did not constitute Priests, and ordains that they should offer the body and blood of *Christ*. Edit. Col. Agrip. anno 1261. p 1 Cor. 11. 27.

Scriptures

Scripture are; as it were easy to demonstrate if that were my business. So that it is meer deceit to lay our quarrels to defects in Gods word, and particularly to its obscurity, which a man would think were evident enough from this that *Children knew it*. The last thing I am to speak to.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

I cannot pass this, that it is *S^t Chrysostomes* observation, that *Timothy* was nursed up in the Scriptures from his childhood. Yea and since his Father was an Heathen, he must have bin taught them by his *Grandmother Lois*, and his *Mother Eunice*, whose faith *S^t Paul* speaks of *2 Tim. 1. 5*. *Children* therefore then, and *Women*, and they sure are *Laics*, read the Bible. Yea and since they knew it, they must read it in a language which they understood: and we know where that is unlawful now. If we consider the first prohibition that appear'd in that Church with Synodical authority against such mens having any Bibles in their own tongue, we shall find it was immediatly upon the preaching of the *Waldenses*, one of whose doctrines it was, ^q *that the Scripture was the rule to judge of faith by: so that whatsoever was not consonant to that must be refused*. This they preach't in France and over Europe in the latter end of the ^r twelfth Century: and that Council which forbade their having of the Bible, we find lately put forth by the frier ^t *D. Achery* as held at *Tholouse* in the beginning of the 13th Century. It seems they apprehended then their doctrines hardly would abide that touchstone: and they therefore had no surer, more compendious way for its security then to prevent such trial, taking care men should not know what was or what was not in Scripture. And it is not possible for me to give account why in their catechising they leave out all that part of the commandments, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven image*, &c. but this only, that they dare not let the laity compare their doctrine and their practice with that Scripture. But tho it is possible they might conceive some danger if the whole Scripture should be expos'd, yet in those portions which the Church it self chose out for her own offices, the *little Lessons*, and *Epistles*, and *Gospels*, those sure one would think were safe: no, not their *Psalter*, *Breviary*, nor their *Hours of the Blessed Virgin* must they have translated in their own tongue; as that ^t Council did determine. And truly when the Roman Missal was turn'd lately into French, and had bin allow'd to be so by the general Assembly of the Clergy in the year ^u 1650. and when it was don it had the usual approbation of the Doctors and some Bishops, and then was printed at Paris with the license of the Vicars general of their Archbishop. Yet another general Assembly of the Clergy the year 1660, whereat there were ^x 36 Bishops, upon pain of ^y excommunication forbid any one to read it, and condemn not only that present traduction, but the thing in general as ^z poysonous, in an Encyclical Epistle to all the Prelates of the Kingdom: and in ^a another they say of him

^q *Usser. de Christi. Eccl. success. c. 6. §. 17. r c. 8. §. 1.*

^f *Spicileg. tom. 2. p. 624.*

^t *Cap. 4.*

^u *Ordonnance de Messieurs les Vicaires Generaux de Monseigneur l'Eminentissime Cardinal de Retz Archevesque de Paris, which is in the 127th page of the Extrait du Procès*

verbal de l'Assemblée general du Clergé de France, tenue à Paris en l'année 1660. x p. 128. of that Extrait. y Ibid. p. 128. dy p. 139. z p. 130. a p. 141. les enfans de nostre mere ont pris les armes contre nous, ils la vont attaquer jusques dans la Sanctuaire, des Mysteres de son Espos pour les profanuer.

that

that did translate it, and the Vicars general that did defend him in it, that by doing so *they did take arms against the Church, attacking their own Mother* (namely by that version) *at the Altar, in that sanctuary, that closet of her spouses mysteries to prostitute them:* and in ^b another Epistle they beseech his Holiness Pope *Alexander* ^b *Ibid.* p. 132. ^{7th} to damn it not in France alone but the whole Church; which he then did by his ^c Bull, for ever interdicting that or any other Version of that book, ^d forbidding all to read or keep it on severest pains; commanding any one that had it to deliver it immediately to the Inquisitor or Ordinary that it might be burnt forthwith. Now thus (whatever it be otherwise) the Mass is certainly a sacrifice when 'tis made a burnt offering to appease his Holiness's indignation: when that ver. Memorial of Christs passion again suffers, and their sacred offices are martyr'd. To see the difference of times; 'twas heretofore a *Pagan Dioclesian*, a strange prodigy of cruelty, who by his edict did command all Christians to deliver up their Bibles or their bodies to be burnt: 'Twas here his *Holiness*, *Christs Vicar*, who by his Bull orders all to give up theirs, that is, all of it that they will allow them, and their prayers also, that they may be forthwith burnt, or themselves to be excommunicated, that is, their souls to be devoted to eternal flames. And whereas then those only that did give theirs up were excommunicate, all Christians shun'd them as they would the plague; and multitudes, whole regions rather gave themselves up to the fire to preserve their Bibles: now those only that have none, or that deliver up theirs, are the true obedient sons of that Church, and the thorough Catholics. I know men plead great danger in that book: it is represented as the source of monstrous doctrines and rebellions. I will not say these men are bold that take upon them to be wiser then Almighty God, and to see dangers he foresaw not, and to prevent them by such methods as thwart his appointments; but I will say that those who talk thus certainly despise their hearers; as if we knew not Heresies were hatcht by those that understood the Bible untranslating: and as if we never heard there were rebellions among them that were forbid to read the Bible. For if there were a *Covenant* among them that had it in their own tongue, so there was an *Holy League* amongst those men that were deny'd it. While those that had the guidance of the subjects conscience were themselves subject to a foreign power, as all Priests of that communion are. How many Kings and Emperors have there bin that did keep the Scriptures from their people, but yet could not keep their people from sedition, nor themselves from ruine by it? In fine when God himself for his own people caus'd his Scripture to be written in their own tongue, to be weekly read in public too, and day and night in private by the people; and when the Apostles by the inspiration of the *Holy Ghost* indited Scripture for the world, they did it in the language that was then most vulgar to the world: what *God* and the *Holy Spirit* thus appointed as the fittest means for the Salvation of the world, to define not expedient, as the Holy Fathers of *Trent* did, looks like blasphemy against *God* and the *Holy Spirit*. But blasphemies of this kind are not to be wonder'd at from

^c p. 147. and the same bull is printed in the Index of prohibited books set out by the command of Alex. 7. at Rome 1664. p. 382. ^d Missale præfatum Gallico idiomate conscriptum vel in posterum alias quomodolibet conscribendum & evulgandum perpetuo damnamus, reprobamus, & interdiciamus, ejusque impressionem, lectionem & retentionem universis & singulis utriusque sexus Christianis fidelibus, cujuscunque gradus, ordinis, conditionis existant, sub pena excommunicationis latus sententiae ipso jure incurrenda perpetuo prohibemus: mandantes quod statim quicumque illud habuerint, vel in futurum quodcumque habebunt realiter & cum effectu exhibeant & tradant locorum Ordinariis vel Inquisitoribus, qui nulla interposita mora, exemplaria igne comburant, & comburi faciant.

e Pigh. 2. de
hier. Eccl.
f Eccius.
g Pigh. de hier.
l. 1. c. 2. fol. 8.
h Idem Pigh.

i Vide Chemn.
examen de S.
Can. p. 47.
k Peres de tra-
dit. par. assert.
3.

l Lam. 4. 3.

m Job 39. 14.

n 1 Pet. 2. 2.

that kind of men, that call the Scripture a *dumb* ^e *judg*, ^f *a black Gospel, inken Divinity*, ^g *written not that they should be the rule of our faith and Religion, but that they should be regulated by, submitted to our faith*; ^h *that the authority of the Church hath given canonical authority to Scriptures, and those the chief, which otherwise they had not, neither from themselves nor from their authors*; and, *that if the Scriptures were not sustain'd by the authority of the Church they would be of no more value then Aesops* ⁱ *fables*. And lastly, ^k *that the people are permitted to read the Bible was the invention of the Devil*.

But to leave the controversy and speak to the advantages which may be had from early institution in the Scripture; 'tis so evident that I need not observe how 'tis for want of principles imprest and wrought into the mind in Childhood, that our youth is so licentious. And 'tis not possible it can be otherwise, when they have nothing to oppose to constitution, when 'tis growing, and to all the temptations both of objects and example; no strict sense of duty planted in them, no such notions as would make resistance to the risings of their inclination, and seducements of ill company: and they therefore follow and indulge to all of them. And in Gods name why do parents give their Children up to God in their first infancy, deliver him so early a possession of them? as if they would have Religion to take seizure on them strait, as if by their baptizing them so soon, they meant to consecrate their whole lives to Gods service, make them his as soon as they were theirs, as if they had bin given them meerly for Gods uses? And they therefore enter them into a vow of Religion almost as soon as they have them: why all this? if accordingly they do not season and prepare them as they shall grow capable. Why when they are but newly born their children, do they take care they shall be regenerate and born again Gods Children? if they do not furnish them with necessaries, educate them into all the qualities and hopes that appertain to the condition of Gods children, as well as they do to that of their own. That parent which not only, like some delicate ones refuses her own breasts to her own infant, but provides no other to sustain it; that does only wash her babe from it's first blood and uncleanness to expose it the more handsom prey to wolves and tigers in the desert, is more savage then those tigers: ^l *even the sea monsters draw out the breasts, they give suck to their young ones*, saith lamenting Jeremy, but he adds *the daughter of my people is cruel like the Ostrich in the wilderness*, ^m *which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them, she is hardened against her young ones*: such are they who when their children are so born again to God, yet as they shall wax capable provide not that which St Peter calls the ⁿ *sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby*: but from their being walht so in the laver of regeneration, take no more care, but expose them forthwith to such lusts and conversations, as are much more wild and savage then those beasts in the comparison; to which they cannot choose but be a prey. They strive indeed, they say, to educate them into men betime, that is, make them conversible and bold: and since for that they must engage them into frequent company, where they see and

and hear mens follies, that I say no worse; by that means they come to have their understandings stor'd with nothing but the Modes, and sins of conversation; fill'd with froth and puddle; men betimes only thus, as they have forwarded their inclinations to, and got an early understanding and experience of, those vices, which one would think men only could be equal for. But by this means the mind, that only part that makes us be men, is not only not improv'd, but dwarf'd. They do not only still continue children in their understanding, as to any thing that's real and solid; but the hopes of reason are destroy'd in them, and its growth kill'd, by turning all its nourishment to feed the beast part; and the Christian is quite starv'd. There needs no other cause be given for the most part, why so many men have no Religion, own being Libertines, and profess vice; for want of education they have nothing in them that does check this, for they had no principles of a Religion instil'd into them. And if at any time it comes to pass that they think it is their interest to take upon them the profession of some Religion, they therefore, since they have no Principles nor rules to judg by, are most apt to choose to profess that Religion, which is like to be most gentle to the courses they have steer'd, and are engag'd in. Now that men hope to find such an one, (whether by its constitution I shall not enquire but,) by its practice is but too apparent. Accordingly when they go over to it, they carry with them, and preserve in it the vices of their no Religion; and by consequence they went not over seriously for Religion: and are therefore so much worse now then when they own'd no Religion, that they do their wickednesses with certainty of easy absolution, and so hopes of salvation; and by this are likely to be made twofold more children of Hell then before: and let them triumph in such conquests. There's nothing in the world that contributes so much to this as mens being not acquainted early with, instructed in, those Divine rules and obligations to piety and virtue, which this book the Bible does afford. If men had bin season'd first with the knowledg and the sense of duty, with the comforts that are in it, with the apprehensions of great blessings that attend it; and the mischiefs that are consequent, indeed essential to impiety and vice here; and their minds were furnish'd with examples of both, which this book abounds with; and their hearts too rais'd with expectations of far greater blessedness in a life hereafter, and with the belief that both that blessedness and life shall have no end: and were made sensible also of strange dreadful torments that await the breach of duty, which shall also last for ever: if these impressions I say, did prevent all other, and take up the mind, and had in them the stamp and character of *God*, and so there were a reverence and awe of him wrought in them, and they lookt upon him as concern'd in all this; how it was his word that said it; and these sentiments were grown into the very habit of their mind; as it would not be easy to corrupt or soften such, so 'twould be much more difficult to shake them, since their faith is founded on *the rock of ages*. Besides the Holy Scriptures carry in them such an obligation of adhering to them, and to them alone, since they are sufficient to make us

wife unto salvation, and are Gods word, that men would not be apt to exchange them for Legends, pious forgeries, for things that can make good no certain title from the Lord: for let them shew an equal derivation of it, bring it down through all the ages as we have don the Scripture's title to him. Otherwise it justly may provoke

• Jer. 2. 13. *Gods exclamation in the Prophet °Jeremy: Be astonisht, O ye Heavens, and be horribly afraid, be yee very desolate; saith the Lord, for my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hew'd them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water: cisterns therefore that may leave them in a state to want a drop of water, when their tongue shall be horribly tormented: whereas he that drinks that living water which Christ gives, his P word, shall never thirst, but it shall be a well of water in him springing up to everlasting life.*

P John 4. 14.
compar'd with
c. 6. 34.

A SER-

A
S E R M O N
O F T H E
O B L I G A T I O N O F B A P T I S M.

Rom. 6. 3.

Know yee not, that so many of us as were baptiz'd into Jesus Christ, were baptiz'd into his death?

THE Ancient Severities of this season, by which men strove (as if they had design'd a fellowship with him in sufferings) to celebrate Christs death in mortifying Rigors and Austerities, at least to use the body of Sin as cruelly as his was us'd: these, I say, were not only for the discipline of Penitents, of Christians that had sin'd against their solemn undertaking and profession, so to actuate their Repentance and to mortify their lusts and inclinations, and by that prepare them for an Absolution on Good-friday Eve: but they also were much earlier employ'd upon the Catechumens, that were Candidates of Christianity, as by which they did express their sorrow for, and detestation of their former lives, and so prepar'd themselves for Baptism on Easter Eve: for that was their most solemn time, as *Tertullian* do's assure us in the 2^d Century, just when that death and passion into which they were baptiz'd was celebrated, *Diem Baptismo solenniore Pascha praestat, cum & Passio Domini in qua tingimur adimpleta est.* ^a And that they did prepare for it with watchings, fastings, weepings, and all rigid mortifying discipline: and before him *Justin M.* And they had in the ^c Greek Church their forty daies for these severities: and a while too in the Roman in ^d *S^t Hierom's* time, and Pope ^e *Siricius* it was so, but quickly sunk into this single weeks performances. But in all those times they had their ^f scrutinies, their strict examinations to try whether their performances were real and sincere. So nice and so severe a thing they thought it to become a Christian. The man was to be mortified and die into the very name. But now, God knows, as for the former discipline for Penitents one Church hath lost it, and the other hath debauch't it into Pageantry, and taught it to countenance and bolster mens continuance in Sin, and minister to vice. So for the other discipline too, if that did import that Baptism hath such engagements in it, men in every Church live now as if they either never had been Christian'd, or had never known, or had perfectly forgot the obligations of that Sacrament; the thing which *S^t Paul* reproves here by his question, *Know you not &c.* And which therefore 'tis impossible there can be a more proper time to call to

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^a De Baptismo cap. 19.

^b Ibid. de Penit. c. 6. praefertim.

^c Vid. Menard. not. ad Greg. S. p. 137. 138.

^d Epist. 61. ad Pammach. c. 4.

^e Siric. ad Himer. Tarracon. c. 2.

^f Tertull. de Penit. c. 6. & de Bapt. vid. Menard. p. 136.

your Remembrance then this is, before you are to celebrate that death you were baptiz'd into. Now to inform such he disputes here very closely. The sum is this: *They that are dead to Sin cannot live any longer in it.* Now as Christs Death was a death to Sin, for in that he died, he died unto Sin once v. 10. i. e. there was an efficacy in that death of his to put an end to all the powers of Sin: which being so, it was impossible he could dye more then once; but must be alive always afterwards to God. So in like manner whoever is baptiz'd, he is baptiz'd into the likeness of that death v. 5. namely into a death to Sin; inasmuch as by solemn profession and exprefs undertaking he do's die to it, for he renounces it; and if he answer that his undertaking, do's so really: and really as Christ died once, so as to live always afterwards to God; engaging himself to keep Gods holy will and commandments and to walk in the same all the days of his life. So that the words suggest these things to be discours'd of. 1. Christs death was a death to Sin. 2^{ly} They that are baptiz'd are baptiz'd into that death, namely into a death to Sin. 3^{ly} They that are baptiz'd into that death are to die as Christ did, i. e. to die to Sin once, so as to live always afterwards to God.

1. Christs death was a death to Sin, i. e. there was an efficacy in Christs death to put an end to all the powers of Sin. And here I mean not that extrinsic efficacy of his death, as it confirm'd the Covenant of the Gospel, whose rewards and punishments engage us against all those powers; nor as his blood did also purchase grace whereby we are enabled to resist them, but the direct influence of that death tends to destroy all the power that the Devil, World, or Flesh had either to command us or condemn us. The Scripture tells us that *by Death he destroy'd him that had the power of Death, i. e. the Devil Heb. 2. 14.* Christ tells us he hath overcome the world for us *John 16. 23.* and *S^t Paul* says by his Cross the *World is crucify'd to us*, and assures us that *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and a Sacrifice for Sin condemned Sin in the flesh that the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfill'd in us Rom. 8. 3.* Which place discovers how all was effected, namely as he was a Sacrifice for Sin: and that not only as that Sacrifice did consecrate him to, and install him in a power to pardon Sins upon Repentance, and so whomsoever by virtue of that motive he took off from serving Sin, from them he took away the guilt of it: but as that Sacrifice did take away the guilt of Sin from us by *bearing it in his own body on the tree*, the direct consequence of which as to its tendency and efficacy is, that *we being*
§ 1 Pet. 2. 24. *dead to sin might live to righteousness.* And in both these manners *§ by his stripes we are healed.*

I do not mean to entertain you with the controversy that there is on the account of these two Schemes, concerning the effects and uses of the death of Christ. Only I cannot choose but wonder why it should be said to be unjust in God to lay upon him the iniquity of us all: so as that he bore death as the punishment due to sin by making satisfaction for us Sinners. For I would gladly know to whom the wrong were don in this, that makes the injustice, and on whose part it was unjust: not on his part that made the satisfaction
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sure. For whether it be wrong to force an innocent person without his consent to suffer for the guilty I shall not dispute. But here Christ *gave himself for us Tit. 2. 14.* and had *power* to do so *John 10. 18.* And having power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again, if he had so much love and pity for lost mankind, as to lay it down for three days to prevent their everlasting death and misery; no justice certainly, nay no self-love forbids this. Much less was there wrong don to them, for whom the satisfaction was made; unless eternal redemption and eternal blessedness purchas'd at such dear rates with such infinite kindness be accounted injuries. Nor yet was it unjust in him that did receive it: for none charge it upon that account. That death which all confess Christ did justly submit to, God most justly might accept; since he could so dispose it, as not only by it to work the Salvation of those whom it was undertaken for, but also the advancement of his humane Nature, that did undergo it, to the highest pitch of glory, to *all power in heaven and earth Phil. 2. 9.* and withal thereby *declare his own Righteousness Rom. 3. 26.* and work the honor also of his other glorious attributes. And therefore if there had bin no injustice (as they say) altho Sin had bin pardon'd without any Satisfaction; much less could the receiving this be a wrong to him. Indeed it seems as if there had bin no right don him by it, because he furnisht all that makes the satisfaction, and he could not receive it therefore, since he gave the value to it. And 'tis most true in compensation of rights of real possessions, and such as can be satisfy'd no otherwise then by that which we call restitution. As for example in a debt; be I never so willing, 'tis impossible I can truly restore or satisfy a debt in any part with what the creditor do's furnish me to do it with: for that is really his extinguishing and forgiving it, and not my payment. But 'tis not so in compensation of the rights of estimation; or of honor, which are satisfy'd by that which we call reparation. The man that had brought up a false report of me, and lessen'd my just reputation and esteem, but yet repents upon his death bed, and would fain repair my honor, sign a recantation, but hath nothing then to make it with, nor strength nor skill it may be to subscribe it: tho I furnish paper pen and ink, write the form and hold and guide his hand to sign it, and explain the marks too of the witnesses, and publish it, which makes the very matter of the Satisfaction; yet he truly satisfy's. The case here also was a case of honor; there was no restitution to be made to God, from whom it was impossible we could take any thing, or make him sustain any real loss: but we had don that which tended to his dishonor infinitely. For when God had made man in his Image, righteous, and Lord of all his creatures, built for immortality of happiness; and as in order to his Government of the whole Universe he put rules into them to guide their workings, so he gave man laws to direct him how to use the other creatures regularly, and to steer himself in order to attaining his own ends of blessedness: so least he should transgress those laws, and so disorder and deprave himself, and the whole Government indeed, if there were neither check nor fear upon him; he did therefore add a Sanction to his Laws, decreed death

death the penalty of each transgression, and God knows that could not be but death eternal; for it was not possible we could recover and rescue our selves out of it if dead once. Now if notwithstanding men did slight this mound, and broke out into all excesses of licences, so as to discompose and vitiate the order, the whole frame of things, not only using other creatures to irregular ends, and so abusing them, but themselves also, disturbing the whole kind; their vices forc'd them to invade other mens proprieties and and liberty and life, and consequently to expose their own; no one thing could be safe, their coffers, and their beds, and their breast too were broke into and thrown open, and having broke the Government thus far, they also set up other Governors, fram'd new Gods, and forgot him that made them, and gave all their service to those forg'd usurping Deities, and worship't them with villany and vices; so far as that they lost the very rules of vertue, and the principles of honesty were quite debauch't. Things being thus, it is impossible that any thing in the world can be more reproachful to one then this is to God: for what can so much tend to the disgrace of an Artificer, as that his workmanship should by no means serve those ends, which it was made for; but the direct contrary to all: design'd to work the glory of their Maker, and their own Eternal happiness; and instead of that they work out nothing but their own destruction and eternal misery, and their Makers disservice: and what could more reproach the wisdom of the Maker? Or what can so much tend to the dishonor of a Supreme Governor, as to have his Authority slighted, his laws broken, trampled on, and for any trifling, least occasion, as if it were don contemptuously, his threatnings all despis'd, his person libel'd, and before his face his homage, worship, Throne given to the meanest, vilest of his creatures, to his basest Rebels? If God suffer this and cannot help it, where is then his power? If he can, and will not, where his holiness? how do's it appear he is displeas'd at Sin, or do's indeed not like it? He is aware the Sinner cannot chuse but make such Judgments of him, for he told him long since, *h these things hast thou don, and I kept silence, and thou thoughtest wickedly, that I was such an one as thy self.* At least as *S^t Paul* asks the wicked Jew, *thro breaking the Law dishonorest thou God?* For so it is: *the name of God among the Gentiles is blasphemed thro you* that pretend to his service, but live wickedly, which makes them think your God is not a God that do's require good life. Now if he do not vindicate himself from these aspersions, and his laws from violation, his authority from contempt, how is he just to himself? or how a righteous Governor? 'Tis true he knows to vindicate himself, and make appear he is an holy God, a righteous Governor; namely if he but execute his laws. But then alas, mankind must perish for evermore, and so the whole design of the creation, (which was made for man to serve God with it, and to praise him for it, to be religious, and be happy,) had bin lost, and still the wisdom of the Maker had bin question'd. Hereupon the Son, who is the wisdom of the Father, is to take flesh, and be made man to teach vertue once more, and assure immortal blessed recompenses to it, and then suffer death, the dire expresse

h Psal. 50. 21.

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of Gods detestation and abhorrence of Sin, what ever he should think fit for vindication of his laws and his authority, his righteousness and holiness; and upon condition that he would receive to favor and to blessedness those that sincerely would believe, repent of all their evil deeds, renounce them heartily, and faithfully endeavor to obey him, he would fully satisfy for the dishonor man had don him.

And truly when he bore the sharp afflictions of the wrath God had for Sin, as certainly he did, for otherwise scarce any malefactor but did meet death with more alacrity and courage. The two Thieves, that suffer'd with him, did not entertain the apprehensions of it with such agonies, nor cry out so with the pain of it, nor so soon sink under it. It was the sense of this which made his blood run out in clots as it were flying from that sense: it was the apprehensions of the guilt imputed to him, and the wrath which he knew was due to it, and did apprehend must fall on him in such degrees and by such measures, as might shew how God detested Sin; it was this that did make him apprehend his God, who was himself, was gon from him, since he left him so long lying under it, as if he had not yet exprest that detestation full enough. Now if we consider that it was the Son of God that did and suffer'd all this, we must see more of Gods attributes exalted to a greater height of honor, then by mankind's either suffering or performing what the Law requir'd. We see his Justice satiate it self in infinitely richer blood then mans, the blood of God: but we see Mercy triumph against Judgment in that very blood. He could have shew'n his detestation of Sin otherwise, even in the Sinners punishment, and so demonstrated his holiness and justice; but it was impossible that he should otherwise shew mercy at these rates, by crucifying his Son who was himself, that he might spare Sinners. Meer pardon had bin no such kindness, as to let us see, that God would do all this and suffer so that he might pardon us. So that mankind forgiven and in glory had not bin so great an evidence of his compassion, nor in torments so great an evidence of his holiness and detestation of iniquity. He had such compassion of us as inclin'd him to deliver up his Son to torment, that he might shew mercy to us; yet all that compassion, tho his bowels yern'd so over us that he would shed his blood for us, could not incline him to forgive Sin without such an instance of his detestation of it; nor yet with it but to such as will forsake their Sins. For how should he appear by those afflictions to detest Sin, if he should accept the Sinner that amends not? give his pardons and rewards to one that will not part with his iniquities? To such Christs sufferings are the Copy of their expectations; he do's let them see how he detests, and will for ever plague Sin unrepented of, who thus torments the imputation of it on the innocent the blessed Son of God. So that Christs sufferings not only are a perfect vindication of the honor of Gods person, and his Government as to Sins committed, but the most astonishing caution against committing them, that can be imagin'd. With us the Law is satisfied by the offenders suffering, sometimes in effigie, if we execute his picture, any thing that by the fright of the example helps to guard the Law

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from being broken. But see here an example, which to make, cost God the life of his own Son, which to make dreadful he provided all the Agonies imaginable, to assure us, he that spared not his own Son, will not spare the guilty: neither can the Sinner possibly be able to endure that to Eternity, which his Son, the Son of God sunk under presently. 'Tis not a satisfaction that will give us leave to enjoy our vices, and atone for us; a price that will buy off the guilt of all our Sins, and let us have them. The satisfaction of this infinite value looks at vindication of Gods Honor, and his Laws, and serves the ends of Government, and assures the Sinner, which amends not, that he must for ever perish. And thus this Sacrifice for Sin condemned Sin to death by his own death. Which death, that we would imitate, we did engage in Baptism: which brings me to the second thing, Whosoever are baptiz'd into Christ Jesus, are baptiz'd into his death: (i. e.) that which the efficacy of his death did work to, that by Baptism we did engage our selves to. Now as to this.

1. Christs death was, as we have now seen, undertaken for the death of Sin. Now Baptism imports the undertaking the same thing; it being as *Oecumenius* upon this place do's say, a Baptism unto that death *ἐν τῷ βάπτισμῳ* &c. Because when we are baptized, we do most solemnly profess and undertake to die to Sin, renounce the Devil &c. and put upon our selves the strictest obligations in the world to do this. That Baptism from its institution was administered with exprefs engagements to this in the very form of it, I could prove out of that office in all ages that have any extant of it, in the rest out of exprefs testimony of ⁱ Fathers thro every one to the Apostles. Which so universal practice makes *S^t Hieroms*, *Primas*, and others explication not seem strange, when they expound that good profession *Timothy profess before many witnesses* 1 Tim. 6. 12. to be that in Baptism. However 'tis sufficient evidence that *S^t Peter*, when he says that the ^k Baptism that saves us, is the *ἐμψόχμα*, the whether question in ^l *S^t Cyprian*, or the *Answer in Tertullian*; or indeed the stipulation (which is both) of a good conscience towards God, do's as much as say there was in Baptism an obligation entred in that form of Law, that stipulation was, with questions an answers to them. ^m For they were askt. and they did answer: Dost thou renounce? I do renounce. Dost thou forsake? I do, &c. And he that at Sacrament says that he do's this with a good, sincere, and upright Conscience, hath the Baptism that saves. But the importance of the Rite may be best known from them that us'd it first, and whence it was deriv'd, even from the *Jews*: who when they did initiate a Profelyte into their Covenant, did it with that Ceremony in this manner; when any man desired to be of their Religion, and they had by several scrutinies examined what the motives were of his conversion, what his aimes; if they were hopes of any thing of this world, they refus'd him; least his conversion should die or change as quickly as his worldly hopes or desires. But if they saw all reason to believe he was sincere, then they expounded to him all the Commandments, laid before him the difficulty in keeping them: if this did not affright him, they explain'd

ⁱ See *Jus. M.*
P. 93.

^k 1 Pet. 3. 21.
^l Epist. 70.
§ 15.

^m Vide *Nicet.*
in *Orat.* 49^m
Greg. Nazian.
Tom. 2. p. 1041.
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to him the mysteries of their faith, and the Commandments again, together with the punishments that were allotted to transgression, the Rewards to them that did observe them. After all which if the man continued stedfast in his purpose, they circumcis'd him, sprinkling his own blood on him as a ceremony to affright him into the Observance. And one would think it were sufficient engagement to have sign'd his resolutions in his blood, and seal'd to them with Circumcision, as the *Targum* words it חתומה מילה, and carried the impression of his promise in his flesh to his lifes end. But as if Baptism had obligation beyond that (and it hath most certainly with those that are baptiz'd into the death of Christ; for there the blood of sprinkling is Christs blood, the blood of God:) but with them also: after they had don this to the man, he was no sooner cur'd of the wound of his circumcision, but they put him (having by him three Witnesses) into the water, and as he was there in it, read to him once again all the Commandments, and if he did profess his resolutions still to keep them, they baptiz'd him, and he was admitted thus into their Covenant, the Conditions, and the Hopes of it. And by Baptism they did admit the children also, if the three Magistrates of the place would undertake for them, they should be brought up in the Jews Religion. And this lets us see 'tis the assuming to keep Gods Commandments, to give over sinning, to die to that, and to live to righteousness, to all holiness and vertue. And with what strength of obligation this was understood to be perform'd by the Ancients, we may perceive in that, as if there either really were, or at least analogically, whatsoever gives solemnity or force in Law to an engagement, so as that it may become inviolable; that they word this with. They seem to think it was an oath; *Tertullian* calls the Answers *Verba Sacramenti*. So they might call a vow made with hands lift up, as that was. ⁿ They were to do it before many Witnesses for more assurance, in the face of the whole Church. Yea that profession too was registred in the Church records always: and ^o *S^t Austin* says it was in heaven too, *Deo & Angelis ejus conscribentibus dixisti, Renuncio*. And tho there were not really in fact, what ^p *Viccomes* dream't, a signing and sealing this their compact with Almighty God meant, when ^q *Cyrl* says ἐντοπισμένης τῇ λαμπρότητι, and in *Tertullians* ring *Signaculo lavacri--* quo fidei pactionem interrogatus obsignat: yet the meer allusion does assure us, they intended to convince us, that as in Covenants amongst men, when there's no one Ceremony wanting of all the formalities and ties of Law to make a compact sure and not to be rescinded or avoided, then performance of Conditions only will serve turn, and is necessary; so this Sacrament puts all the same necessities upon the baptized. And it is no wonder therefore if the same *Tertullian* word that men are *intinctione alligati*, tied from Sin by it. Nay more *S^t Paul* says, we are held from it by the bonds of Death, for here he says, *we are baptiz'd into Death to Sin*, as if he did suppose us no more able to have any motion to it, then a carcass hath; yea shut up sequestred from the practice of it as it were in the grave, buried with Christ, or as Christ was in that Death.

'Tis plain this Scripture does suppose a baptiz'd person dead to

n Nicet. in Greg. Naz. Orat. 40. n. 57. p. 1087. Tom. 2. o De Symb. ad Catech. l. 4. c. 1. Tom. 9. pag. 1030. p De Antiqu. Bapt. Ritibus l. 2. c. 27. q Catech. 1. Mystagog. r De Pudicit. c. 9. p. 725.

s De Panit. c. 6.

Sin, as truly as they are suppos'd dead, who are buried: for the Ceremony represents a burial upon that account, and signifies the bonds or obligations, that by Baptism are put upon a Christian to restrain him from Sin, are in moral speaking of like force as those bonds and swaths, in which they wind up dead men, grave-cloaths that do bind them hand and foot in natural speaking, are of, to restrain from motion; and a Christian, that hath burst all these engagements, and walks in the way of Sinners, that courts pleasures, and embraces lusts, pursues the world, or runs to the excess of riots, is a great prodigy in manners, as a corps that had broke his coffin, thrust away his grave-stone, and that lapt up in his winding-sheet should yet come and converse, and practise all the offices of life, would be a prodigy in nature. And therefore 'tis not strange, if our Apostle press hard and suppose that they never do again return to live to Sin, to which they were already dead and buried with Christ, (for they that are baptiz'd into the death of Christ, are :) they were so to die as Christ, that is, to die to Sin once, so as to live always afterwards to God, having engag'd to keep Gods holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of their life: the 3^d thing that I was to speak to,

That Baptism does bind us so to die to Sin, as that we never live to it again, *i. e.* be given up to it, so that it come to have dominion of us, and that we obey it in fulfilling of its lusts, and go on in a known deliberate habit, in a course of its repeated acts, is the thing my text is brought to prove: for in the verse before he says, *We that are dead to Sin, πῶς ἔτι ζήσομεν, How shall we yet again live to it?* That cannot be: for they that are baptiz'd, are baptiz'd into the death of Christ, a death like his, *who in that he died to Sin, died but once*, v. 10. but ever afterwards *he lives to God*, and cannot die again: So also reckon yee your selves to be dead to Sin, v. 11. He therefore that is truly dead to Sin, must be so dead as that he cannot live to it, for then there would be a necessity that he should die to it again, which can no more be, it should seem, by the importances of Baptism, then that Christ can die again. We read indeed of those that *crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh*, Heb. 6. 6. but he dies not for them again, *there remains no more sacrifice for sin*; which words being said of those who being once by Baptism inlightned fall away, and do not persevere to their lives end, makes it look fearfully, as if it were meant of every one, that after having undertaken this in earnest do's relapse to Sin so far, as that it lives in him, and reigns over him again. In the race that is set before us he that runs with all his might and heart may stumble and fall, but 'tis impossible that he can wilfully turn back again, walk contrary in full carriere. Our Savior seems to state the question perfectly John 13. v. 8, 9, 10. where he tells St Peter and the rest of the Apostles, that they *that were washt, were clean wholly, save their feet*, need only have them afterwards washt; but they had so much need of that, otherwise they *had no part in him*. The Traveller that had cleans'd himself, and had preserv'd his body carefully from all defilements, let him do his best, his journey yet must needs foul his feet, and therefore 'twas the custome always there to wash them. So in your Pilgrimage

grimage here, those that have by Baptism bin cleans'd (for so the Author in *S^t Cyprian* expounds it, and *Tertullian* from this verse proves the Apostles had bin baptiz'd) and according to the vow there made renounced sincerely, rid themselves of all the gross unclean habitual courses of their life, yet their conversing with this Earth will certainly contract such sullages, that if that which is typ'd and meant here by *my washing of your feet*, be not don to them, however they have bin baptiz'd into me, they can have no part in me, no benefit from me. All of you, my Apostles, must be cleans'd from your ambitions, your contentious pride, which puts you upon frequent strifes *whi h of you shall be greatest*, *Math. 20. &c.* Some of you from the fury of your passion and revengeful heats, that would needs call for fire from heaven, *Luke 9. 54.* Peter in one night (some think in this that he was washt) did also find there was occasion that his arrogant presumption of his own strength, how *tho all should be offended, he would not*; but *would die* for his Master *Math. 26. 33.* should be washt away: his negligence and carelesness in duty also, watching not even in temptation, when he saw his Master by him in an Agony, *v. 40*: his wrath so great as that it made him draw his sword and wound without authority: and beyond all, that evil temper of his mind, that made him thrice deny his Master, Savior, God, for fear of danger; all these must be washt away. In fine, whatever passions or affections to ill things, or single acts that do surprise men in their course, all these, tho only he that washt us in his own blood, can wash away and cleanse us from; yet these evidently may be in the *ἀλλοιούμενοι*, in the baptized: but continuance, life, dominion cannot, he supposeth. If these be, the washing of the feet does not cleanse these, and there's no other after-washing: for *he that is washt must not need, save to have his feet washt.* So that he that is washt, however carefully he walk, he will contract some dust and some foul spots it may be, but he will not rowl himself, nor wallow in the mire. At least Christ seems to think they would not; he would not imagine men would live in constant opposition to such obligations of eternal consequence, and of their own assuming; and after they had ty'd themselves with their own vows, yet live most dissolutely, letting loose themselves to all the things they had so solemnly abjur'd: indeed pursuing them as if the vow were on the other side, as if they had renounc'd Religion and the God of it, and by their actions did all they could to exorcize and conjure out of them the holy Spirit and the whole Trinity, into whose possession they were given in their Baptism: As if indeed their bodies were sprinkled to those purposes the Heathens bodies were in the Solemnities of the infernal Gods, to consecrate and devote them to those foul Fiends, and their fouler deeds. And where it is not thus, yet those divine engagements are not half so sacred with them as the promises of their debaucht converses, or the affignations of their folly: they break them without any least reluctance in sport, in the intemperances of their mirth they drown them; and with the least puff of scoffing or blaspheming breath blow of all those necessities this Sacrament does put upon them; and however *S^t Paul* call it *death* and *burial*, their Sin lives and con-

quers all Gods obligations to piety, and triumphs over vows and oaths, and murders resurrection to new life. I must confess I know not what it is, but it is plain now adays few men seem to consider there is such a binding sacredness in Baptism, such things they believe were promised in their names when they were Infants by their Sureties, who, they think, may be concern'd to mind them that they take good courses: but sure this cannot be interpreted their own act so formally as to expose them to such dismal guilts, as breach of vows and perjury, with all aggravations possible, when e're they fail. They cannot think it the same thing as in the Christians of the first ages, who had first perfect conviction of the everlasting miserable state of Sinners, and that out of that there was no refuge but in Christianity, which not only offered to relieve, but make them blessed to Eternity, upon which assurance they repented, wept, and beg'd to be admitted into it, and took upon them all the Rules of it with all obligations to keep them; and this out of perfect understanding and deliberate choice, full resolution. Such was the case of the first Christians, but theirs does not look so sacredly.

Indeed if any do believe they can come off from all as from engagements put upon them under age, that those vows were but promises made for them in minority, and will not hold against them: then they might do well to be ingenuous and plead this, to renounce the renunciations that were made for them, cancel and disown all. So we read the men of *Congo* (when their land was first discovered by the *Portuguez*) were easily perswaded into Christianity, and baptiz'd in great abundance; but when they found it did require some strictnesses, they had no mind to bear, that they must leave their Heathen practices, particularly their multitude of women, they came back to the Church, renounc'd what they had don, and return'd back to their indulgent Heathenism. For why, they knew not how to reconcile the Christian vow with living in the open breach of it, they were too honest for such practices. Now such an obligation is most certainly Essential to Baptism in what age soever 'tis administred. For that being the rite of entring the new Covenant, and a Covenant being a mutual contract, something agreed on and contracted for on both the parties that do covenant, of which that Sacrament is the Seal, it is impossible, but from the nature of the thing it must oblige them that receive it to the performance of all that the Covenant does require on their part. And this obligation was still entred even when Infants were admitted in the way of vow or solemn promise. 'Tis not *S^t Austins* age alone which calls that custom ancient: but *Tertullian* in the second Century assures us, Infants promis'd by Sureties; and we saw the children of the Jewish Proselytes had undertakers. And evidently "by Gods own prescription children entred Covenant with him; for they were circumcis'd at eight daies old, and that is call'd so *Gen. 17. 14.* and that by that rite they did undertake to keep their whole Law, is most certain: for *S^t Paul* assures us *Gal. v. 3. I testify to every man that is circumcis'd, that he makes himself a debtor to do the whole Law.* So here the rite hath that importance; the Sureties do

^t *Epist. 23. ad Bonifacium.*

^u See *Deut. 29. V. 10, 11.*

do but answer what it stands for, and if the infant does not understand the vow at present, so he is not to perform it for the present, it is an obligation in relation to future life, then he will understand it, when he is to keep it. After the leifures of Nature, when the Age of temptation and knowledg are come, then it will be of force upon him when it is of use to him; but 'tis entred at the present.

And that none may think its being made for them by others in their name, and their consent not had, lessens the engagement, give me leave to call to your remembrance 2^{ly}, how that was made up and supply'd with all solemnity of obligation possible in Confirmation. For as from the beginning upon those that were baptiz'd when they were of Age, the Apostles, and then afterwards their Successors, by solemn laying on of hands and praying did invite, call down the H. Ghost, who hover'd there over the laver of Regeneration to hatch the new creature, as he once mov'd on the face of the waters to warm them into the first creation; that so his strengths and graces might be added to their vows: so when infants were baptiz'd, this was deferr'd for this end, as our Church declares, *that when they come to years of discretion, and have learnt what was promised for them in Baptism, they may themselves, with their own mouth and with their own consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same, and also promise, that by the grace of God they will evermore endeavor themselves faithfully to observe and keep them;* which they do there upon their knees: whereupon that grace is pray'd for for them, and they blest by those, whom God hath appointed to bless in his name; that so they who just then are grown able to be taught all the debaucheries of youth, warm'd into the desires and the strengths of vice, might have not only this check of their own vows fresh upon them, but the effusions of the H. Spirit, those living Rivers in the inwards, as S^t John expresses, that may quench and wash away those unclean heats.

3. To exprefs more the inviolable Sacredness of those obligations, which in Baptism were entred, and to let us see they were baptiz'd into the Death of Christ, from the first times, they did immediatly make them, that were baptiz'd, partakers of the Symbols of that Death. For from that Sacrament they proceeded directly to the other, the Lord's Supper: of those that were baptiz'd after they were of age we can derive that practice quite from ^{x 2^d Apol.} Justin Martyr; which being don so universally to them, no question gave occasion to the doing it to Infants after Baptism, and ^{pag. 47.} then they found a text for it, and made that universal also. But tho that be justly chang'd, yet after Confirmation we proceed to that; and often we repeat the use of it: now that we renew in the Lord's Supper what we did engage in Baptism, when we entred the new Covenant, is evident. Christ calls the cup there in S^t Luke *the new Covenant in his blood*, and in S^t Mark, *this is my blood* τὸ αἷμα τοῦ καινῆς διαθήκης, that blood of the new Covenant. The words relate to those Exod. 24. 8. where it is also said this is *the blood of the Covenant*; for God dd seal his Covenants still with blood. Whereupon neither was the first Covenant dedicated without blood. Heb. 9. 18. that was its Sanction.

Sanction. Now the Sanction of a Covenant is some Rite, which being celebrated in the name of those that covenant, does oblige them to stand to, not to rescind the agreement; which that Rite was contriv'd to do (supposing that the most effectual way) by imprecating mischief on the person that did break it. The usual way was either killing of a beast, the blood of which they pour'd out, or in some Nations drank, or else they did dissect and tear the victim and either swear over, or pass thro between the parts; by one of these significative Ceremonies implying a severe commination, *So be it don to him that breaks this vow.* And all these the Heathen, who are full of the Examples, seem to have deriv'd from Gods own practice, who appointed *Abraham* to do so, when he went to make a Covenant with him *Gen. 15.* and his meaning in such Rites he hath reveled by *Jer. 34. 18, 19. the men that have transgressed my Covenant, even the Princes, Priests, and all the People that have pass between the parts of the Calf* וְהָיָה אִתָּם חֵטְא, *I will make those men that Calf, or as that Calf, which they did cut in twain, and pass between the parts thereof, i. e. I will divide and separate them among the Nations.* For the wishes of all this that Ceremony did import. But more expressly there in *Exod. 24. 6. And Moses took the half of the blood and put it in the Basins, for the Peoples part, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the Altar, as on Gods part, and then he took the book of the Covenant, v. 7. and read it in the audience of the People.* Now that Book, especially in the four foregoing chapters said on Gods part what he requir'd of them and what he would do for them: and the People said on their part, *All that the Lord hath said we will do, and be obedient, v. 7.* Upon which undertaking on both sides *Moses took the blood and sprinkled both the book and all the people, Heb. 9. 19. saying, this is the blood of the Covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning these words* i. e. thus both parts of you oblige your selves in figure to make good your Articles, In shedding this blood on the Book the Lords indenture, he, for whom it is impossible to fail his word, yet condescends to use this rite, by which those men that covenant devote their own blood to be shed, if they should fail: and in its sprinkling on you all, you also wish, if you perform not your part, which you promis'd, that your own be so poured out. This is shed as your type, and 'tis your giving earnest that your own is forfeit, when you fail in your Conditions. For that these wishes were imply'd all in that Ceremony, and not only at the first sealing of the Covenant, but meer Repetition of it, when 'twas only read again before and to them and their children, *Moses tells them; All you are here this day* לְעֵבֶר *to pass, alluding to divided Sacrifices, to pass, I say, into the Covenant* וּבְכֹל הַיּוֹם *and into the execratory oath, into the imprecations which are signified in those divided Sacrifices and that Blood-shedding, the Sanctions of that Covenant.*

Now what that Blood and those divided Sacrifices were to that Covenant, that Christ sacrificed, his body broken and his blood shed was to ours: and is therefore call'd, *Heb. c. 10. the Blood of the Covenant* (וְדָם הַבְּרִית, with which it was ratified and hallowed) God no more engaged in faint types, in the blood of goats and calves,
but

but in the blood of God, with that he ratified, hallowed the new Covenant. And when our Savior calls the Sacramental cup *the new Covenant in his blood*, and *the blood of the new Covenant*, it must have the like importance, the broken bread must be as the divided Sacrifice; the wine poured out, the Covenant Blood: by taking which we much more properly may be said to pass into the Covenant, and into the oath and curses of it, then the Jews were said by *Moses* to do so at the meer Repetition of theirs, or indeed at the first making. For that blood was not sprinkled on us as theirs was, but drunk in; we thus by our own act and deed devoting our selves to those curses if we fail, yea taking earnest of them into us.

The sum is this: Our Saviors words of this cup being the very same with those in *Exodus*, demonstrate that this Sacrament is a renewing of our Gospel Covenant with Sacrifice. The doing that is the assuming to endeavor to observe all the conditions of that Covenant with a most solemn vow or oath, and under curses; the tenor of those curses is, Let that light on me if I fail, which was inflicted on the federal Sacrifice. Now that Sacrifice was Christ himself, the ceremony of it was his body torn and his blood poured out, in a word, all those bitter agonies which we there commemorate, and which that Sacrament does represent. It signifies therefore that we there renew our vow of Baptism, assume faithful Evangelical Obedience to all the Gospel do's require: which if we do not faithfully endeavor, and where we transgress repent, but fail wilfully, we wish that all the agonies of Christ may be our portion. This is the Tenor of those our performances.

And now consider, I beseech you in the fear of God, with what strange multiplied arts of managery Almighty God pursu'd you thro all the stages of your life to seize on you, & scare you, that you might not be a prey to vice and to the Devil. How in your first Infancy he took early possession, and in the soft tendernefs of that age (a temper the most capable of impression) set his seal upon you, markt you for his own, that so the first thing you should come to understand might be, that you already were engag'd to him and to his service, not only *Sacritatis designati* in *Tertullian*, design'd and set apart for, consecrate to holiness; but in a solemn vow of it, sworn to Religion and the keeping of Gods Commandments. So that the sense of these great obligations might prevent not only any first essays of vice, but even the first inclinations of the appetite or body. We know whose fault it is, if children be not season'd in this manner. Now when by means of careful education pious principles have taken up their yet untainted understandings, when their minds are stor'd with images of good things, and their apprehensions wrought into an awe of God and reverence for Religion, and to an abhorrency of vice; least constitution ripening, curiosity inciting, edging it, example drawing in, encouraging, and conversation pushing forwards, Youth that is not settled steddly, hath not firmness nor experience, might yeeld to, at least not break the first assaults, which for the most part are the most impetuous: that age was call'd upon to come, and solemnly upon their knees before the Congregation to renew their vows. Which could not but re-

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fresh the sense of all their obligations, and make new and strong impressions of their great concern of fearing God and being cautious of all Sin, and more and more excite and actuate their care in the performances of dutiful obedience. And truly besides those assistances and blessings we might hopefully expect to reap in that rite from the prayers and benedictions of Gods Officers of blessing; besides this, at that time when the mind had not bin yet deflowered, the meer shame of violating what we had so publicly, so holily resolv'd and sworn, must needs be a strong curb to rein us in from evil. Our heart would have fail'd us, if we had attempted any; for our very blushes must have call'd away the blood from thence to rise against the thing we had so solemnly renounc'd and bid defiance to. Yet more to strengthen us we were thenceforwards yearly call'd upon at frequent solemn seasons to renew all in a more engaging Ceremony, in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, where with deliberated preparation in the most tremendous Symbols we again made oath, *that we would not deceive, wrong, or oppress any, bear false witness, kill, commit adultery, or steal, or covet*: and all this with the most astonishing circumstances possible, doing it in the blood of Christ that was shed for Sin, as it were shewing to our selves the curst consequences of it, how it tore his body, spilt his blood, and could have no less expiation: so to make it look more dreadful to us. And having don so, taking in those pledges of that expiation into us, as it were expressing we receiv'd them on those terms we had resolved there; and no otherwise expected that they should be salutary to us, then as we endeavored to observe them. And to do thus hath bin our constant practice, and this I must suppose we are designing now, preparing for, and the more to affect our own selves with a real intimate sense of all this, that Passion of our Savior must be represented to us; Christ crucified before our eyes. We consecrate a day to shew our selves that infinite indignation God Almighty hath to Sin, which could not express it self in softer easier ways, then in the Agonies and bloody sweat, the Cross and Passion of the Son of God: and shew our selves that infinite love of his to Sinners, that inclin'd him to do all this for, accept it in the stead of those that faithfully would cleave to him and leave their sins: and to give more pungency to all this, that it may touch livelier and pierce deeper, we intend to entertain the celebration with the humbling and afflicting of our own souls; and all this to actuate, give life and vigor to the resolutions that we are to take upon it. For while our hearts will be yet wreaking with the apprehensions, we intend in that blood to renew again our vows, and this we do from year to year, and mean to do now. Now sure we think we are in earnest when we do thus: we do not tie these sacred bonds upon our selves, as *Samson* did teach *Dalilah* to do on him, only to try our own strengths on them, and to serve us to break thro. And therefore in Gods name that we would now begin to try in earnest whether we could keep them, and that whosoever vows thus would first set himself against that Sin, which constitution or his custom makes his forest enemy, that if he chance to come neer an occasion of it, he consider, I have deeply sworn against thee, I have made

*y Plin. Epist.
ad Trajan.*

made a Covenant with my God and with my eyes, and with my ears, and bound them from pursuing their careers over the invitations, that have hitherto crept in at them, and betray'd me; and whensoever a temptation do's come towards thee, bethink thy self, that 'tis the Devils harbinger, and that he himself is not far off, but is there laying trains for thee, and however kind his address be, he hath a dagger at thy heart, and a chain at thy feet, which he is then come from below to get thee into out of all thy vows; and a dungeon in Hell for thee. Do not therefore treat with it, but call up all thy resolution and thy oaths; for otherwise thou dost betray thy self, and it is plain thou hast no mind to keep them, that thou didst not take them with that meaning. And truly any one would think so, that consider'd but mens vows and conversations: how they first vow cleanness in the Laver, which the Holy Ghost did hallow, and then make their whole lives to be but wallowing in uncleanness, and make that filthy, which that vow had cleansed. And then they swear amendment at the Altar, dip those oaths in blood to make them solemn; and strait mind and contrive nothing else but how to vomit up those Oaths and that Blood. They seem before a Sacrament to have some sorrow, or at least some thoughtfulness about their Sins; but yet not resolving perfectly to part with them, they bring them with them to that Sacrament, set them at Christs table, as it were to feed on that body which they crucified, make them imbrue their hands in that blood which they shed. And this is the return they make to that blood shed for them. They bring them and their vows against them both together to the Altar, and they leave their vows there, but they take their Sins back with them, and serve them still. Now does eternal ruin look so lovely to us, as that we will break thro all oaths to get at it? Is't worth the while to be at once false to God and our own blessedness? Do vows so straiten us, that we cannot endure the obligations to be happy? In Gods name be at last more true to your own Souls: consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding.

A
S E R M O N
 OF THE
PREROGATIVE OF MERCY,
 in being the best SACRIFICE.

Matth. 9. 13.

Go yee and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice.



THE words are part of a reply of our Saviors to a cavilling question of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who seeing him converse familiarly, accept the friendship of an invitation, sit and eat with open noted Sinners, and (which was as bad a name amongst them) *Publicans*, ask his Disciples why they and their Master do what they know was forbidden and unlawful? To whom having answer'd, that he did converse with them only in order to their cure, (now a Physitian, that goes to visit his sick Patients, is not therefore blam'd for going to them because they are sick,) he further justifies himself by an account of Gods own mind and dealing set down in the Scripture, of whose meaning, if they had not taken notice hitherto, he bids them now go learn it. For God tells them by his Prophet *Hosea*, that he prefers acts of mercy, doing good to others, before any Ceremonies of his Worship, tho himself ordain'd them, whether Sacrifices or whatever others. For *I will*, says he, *have mercy and not sacrifice*. Therefore Christ did but comply with Gods own will, when he accepted of an invitation from such sinners, merely to have the better opportunity to invite them to repentance and to heaven; and in doing so did but prefer the acts of highest mercy in the world, the doing everlasting blessed good to souls, before obedience to such ritual precepts, as forbad converse with the unclean and sinful.

I need not here observe, that the negation is but comparative, and means, I will not have Sacrifice, but Mercy rather, yea I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice, where I cannot have both; or that by Sacrifice also is meant all Ceremonies of Gods Worship, altho instituted by himself, and those not taken by themselves and merely external Acts and void of the inward zeal and devotion that should spirit them, but taken in their best states; yet God will have works of Mercy rather. And that doctrine is, it seems, worth learning and attending to: for so in the text there is besides the proposition it self *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*, also the insinuation of its usefulness in those words, *go and learn what that means*.

I shall not break these into other parts, but raise some Propositions for the subjects of my discourse. And

First since God compares two sorts of things here in the text, and says he will have, or is pleas'd with one and not the other, which other yet 'tis plain that he was pleas'd with and would have, for he commanded them; 'tis evident he does imply, that as these, call'd here Sacrifices, were grateful to him, as they were obedience to his precepts; so the other therefore, which he does prefer to those, they must be good and acceptable to him in themselves, not only as they are commanded. Some actions therefore have an intrinsic honesty, are of themselves, in their own nature morally good and well-pleasing to God, as some also are the contrary.

^{2^{dly}} Of all that are so in that manner good, those of Mercy are in an especial manner such, *I will have mercy.*

^{3^{dly}} Of all acts of mercy those are best and most well-pleasing in Gods sight, which are employ'd in reducing Sinners from their evil ways: those were such our Savior is here pleading for. And

^{4^{thly}} 'Tis onely the opportunity and the design and hope of doing good to Sinners by reforming them, that can make familiar converse with them excusable and lawful: I mean, where no duty of a relation do's oblige to it. Christ himself had no other plea to justify his eating with them, but that he intended it as a mercy to them, as his opportunity to call them to repentance, All these we see flow naturally from the words.

First, some actions have an intrinsic honesty, are of themselves, in their own nature morally good and well-pleasing to God, as some are the contrary. When I say they have an intrinsic honesty and are in nature good, I mean the rule of them is intrinsic and essential to the agent, is indeed his nature, and by consequence their goodness is as universal and eternal as that nature. Now it is a doctrine that hath had Advocates as ancient as the great *Carneades* and the Sect of the *Pyrrhonians*, that in nature antecedent to all laws and constitutions there is no rule of unjust or just, good or evil, honest or dishonest; and that nothing of it self is one or other, but as our concerns or interests do make it to our selves, to prosecute which is the only inclination and the only rule that nature gives us: or else, as the public interests incline superior powers to prescribe them, whom it is our interest also to obey. Accordingly we find this saying in *Thucydides*, that to them that are in power *ἡ δὲ ἐν ἀλογον ὅτι συμφέρον*, *nothing is unreasonable that is useful.* And the *Athenians* being stronger tell the *Melii*, that by rules of human reason things are just in that degree that they are necessary. And then as necessities and interests do chance to vary, good and just must change into their contrary; and as different countries and persons cannot but have opposite rules and measures of necessity and usefulness, so they must of just and honest: thus the laws of Vertue serve, like Almanacks, but for such a latitude, and a different elevation of the Pole quite alters them, and makes them good for nothing. A pleasant sort of good and honest this, which any wall or dike, that divides Provinces or Countries, can give boundaries, lines, and rules to, so as that it shall be vertue and right on one side, vice and error

on the other: as if those principles of good and evil, which seem planted in us, and the world calls natural, were nothing else but prejudices taken in from early conversation; as dogs learn (they say) the skill of chase. And it were great pity, if this age, which so much needs the patronage of such a principle to give countenance to their licentious practices, had not also found out some, that reestablish and plead for this. But I shall not give you or my self the trouble to advert to them, but shall onely briefly lay the grounds of the contrary truth, which is so plainly set down here in the text: for if God himself tho he had constituted both the acts of Mercy and the acts of Worship, so that whatsoever goodness law or constitution (tho divine) could give, both had, if yet he shall prefer, and will have one much rather than the other, 'tis because there is some difference in the things themselves. For he that sees and judges as things are, if he shall judge one better, then it is so, and that by some rule antecedent to that judgment, that is, from the nature of the thing it self, which is the reason why he judges of them diversly, and constitutes, and wills them differently. So that God supposeth, that there are some actions of themselves, and in their own nature morally good; neither is it hard to prove it. And tho, if we but view'd mans nature in it self, whether made by God or chance and atomes it matters not, we should see sufficient grounds to count his actions laudable or blame-worthy, as being morally good or bad, according as they are directed by, or deviate from that rule: yet in my first proposal of the thing, I shall make bold to take in God as the contriver of mans nature, and all other. Now when the great Creator of the Universe had made it up of infinite variety of beings in an excellent order, 'tis most certain that He being a most wise agent made each being for some end, which it was to attain, unless it were made in vain: but ends are not attainable, but by operations suited and proportion'd to those ends. The operations of a simple element will not reach the ends of life, or sense, or reason; as in artificial things we cannot use a ball to cut, or Coulander to carry water in, and therefore as it is the business of each art to take care, that their tools and all their productions be wrought so, that their very make may fit them to work out these uses they are made for: so in Nature, Gods art, it was therefore necessary he should frame each several being so, as that the nature of it should be as it were a rule to it, to regulate the manner and the measures of its workings, that so they might tend orderly and constantly towards those ends, which he design'd their operations to work out, and in their courses might comport with one anothers motions; and by doing so contribute to the ends and uses of the whole. For if the nature of each being were not such a principle, causing some to move in one way, some another, fitting this for one use, that for others: or if in their motions, or their other actings they should deviate from the rule of nature, they could neither be sayd to be those beings, neither would they make a world, but Chaos, routing always and confounding one another. But while they do observe that rule, act and are mov'd according to their nature, and by doing so fulfil their uses, and work out the ends
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of their creation. So we see they are the preservation of the world, and consequently they must needs be truly, what God saw they were, when He had made them all, very good. Those of them indeed that are determin'd by their nature to one course, which they can neither err from, nor discern that they observe, not morally good; because there is no place for vertue, since there is none for choice in such determinations. But then there is a creature that hath faculties to understand and chuse, and which hath principles impress'd upon him, that inable him for apprehension, judgment, and discourse of reason, and by consequence who is onely able, as to understand himself, so also to find out the nature and the uses of the rest, and therefore who alone is capable and fit to be the Lord of them, and was made so, and hath therefore ends above the ends of all the rest; whole nature also, as the others were, (there being the same reason of them all) was a law to it self, to regulate his actings, even all his apprehensions, judgings, reasonings, and his choices. Now if he also do not turn aside from the line of direction, which his being do's incline him unto, in pursuance of the aims of a nature that is rational and was made for society, his actings must be good, that is, fit for the uses, which he was design'd for, and it is not possible that they can fail his Makers ends, and consequently must be well pleasing to his great and wise and good Artificer, since so they justify the goodness of the workmanship. But yet if he neglect and violate the laws of his own being, and as he corrupts himself, so also being Lord of other creatures, if he employ them not to their own uses, but abuse them, make them serve irregular and vitiated purposes, this male-administration cannot but renverse the state of things. Thus acting he not only puts himself by those ends he was made for; but defeats God of his aims in the creation of the rest, by putting them to uses that despite him meerly, stand in perfect opposition to his wisdom, holiness, and goodness, all his attributes, and work out nothing but disorder and destruction, and by consequence are bad and most displeasing to their Maker, and since these (as the other good ones were) are don discernedly and with deliberation and choice, they are therefore morally so. So that actions of men in themselves, and by the rules of nature, may be morally good and well pleasing in Gods sight, or the contrary.

Yea which will follow from the premises, and which I only toucht before, altho there were no law of a superior being, which requir'd that man should live conformable to his own nature, and to those impressions and notices, which in his making have bin stamp't upon him, to direct and regulate his actings, yet his very nature, howsoever made or hapning, being such a rule to all his works, would have the reason of a law to him: for as with them that grant such a Superior and Creator, that very supreme being, tho he be Almighty, can do all things, yet there are such things, that 'tis impossible for him to do, they are so bad, and all his actions are most infinitely good, not by reason of a conformity to the precepts or prohibitions of a law; for none such can be set to God, but merely as they are conformable to the most infinite perfection of his nature. So abstracting from all law of a superior being, and considering

on the other: as if those principles of good and evil, which seem planted in us, and the world calls natural, were nothing else but prejudices taken in from early conversation; as dogs learn (they say) the skill of chase. And it were great pity, if this age, which so much needs the patronage of such a principle to give countenance to their licentious practices, had not also found out some, that reestablish and plead for this. But I shall not give you or my self the trouble to advert to them, but shall onely briefly lay the grounds of the contrary truth, which is so plainly set down here in the text: for if God himself tho he had constituted both the acts of Mercy and the acts of Worship, so that whatsoever goodness law or constitution (tho divine) could give, both had, if yet he shall prefer, and will have one much rather than the other, 'tis because there is some difference in the things themselves. For he that sees and judges as things are, if he shall judge one better, then it is so, and that by some rule antecedent to that judgment, that is, from the nature of the thing it self, which is the reason why he judges of them diversly, and constitutes, and wills them differently. So that God supposeth, that there are some actions of themselves, and in their own nature morally good; neither is it hard to prove it. And tho, if we but view'd mans nature in it self, whether made by God or chance and atomes it matters not, we should see sufficient grounds to count his actions laudable or blame-worthy, as being morally good or bad, according as they are directed by, or deviate from that rule: yet in my first proposal of the thing, I shall make bold to take in God as the contriver of mans nature, and all other. Now when the great Creator of the Universe had made it up of infinite variety of beings in an excellent order, 'tis most certain that He being a most wise agent made each being for some end, which it was to attain, unless it were made in vain: but ends are not attainable, but by operations suited and proportion'd to those ends. The operations of a simple element will not reach the ends of life, or sense, or reason; as in artificial things we cannot use a ball to cut, or Coulander to carry water in, and therefore as it is the business of each art to take care, that their tools and all their productions be wrought so, that their very make may fit them to work out these uses they are made for: so in Nature, Gods art, it was therefore necessary he should frame each several being so, as that the nature of it should be as it were a rule to it, to regulate the manner and the measures of its workings, that so they might tend orderly and constantly towards those ends, which he design'd their operations to work out, and in their courses might comport with one anothers motions; and by doing so contribute to the ends and uses of the whole. For if the nature of each being were not such a principle, causing some to move in one way, some another, fitting this for one use, that for others: or if in their motions, or their other actings they should deviate from the rule of nature, they could neither be sayd to be those beings, neither would they make a world, but Chaos, routing always and confounding one another. But while they do observe that rule, act and are mov'd according to their nature, and by doing so fulfil their uses, and work out the ends
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of their creation. So we see they are the preservation of the world, and consequently they must needs be truly, what God saw they were, when He had made them all, very good. Those of them indeed that are determin'd by their nature to one course, which they can neither err from, nor discern that they observe, not morally good; because there is no place for vertue, since there is none for choice in such determinations. But then there is a creature that hath faculties to understand and chuse, and which hath principles imprest upon him, that inable him for apprehension, judgment, and discourse of reason, and by consequence who is onely able, as to understand himself, so also to find out the nature and the uses of the rest, and therefore who alone is capable and fit to be the Lord of them, and was made so, and hath therefore ends above the ends of all the rest; whole nature also, as the others were, (there being the same reason of them all) was a law to it self, to regulate his actings, even all his apprehensions, judgings, reasonings, and his choices. Now if he also do not turn aside from the line of direction, which his being do's incline him unto, in pursuance of the aims of a nature that is rational and was made for society, his actings must be good, that is, fit for the uses, which he was design'd for, and it is not possible that they can fail his Makers ends, and consequently must be well pleasing to his great and wise and good Artificer, since so they justify the goodness of the workmanship. But yet if he neglect and violate the laws of his own being, and as he corrupts himself, so also being Lord of other creatures, if he employ them not to their own uses, but abuse them, make them serve irregular and vitiated purposes, this male-administration cannot but renverse the state of things. Thus acting he not only puts himself by those ends he was made for; but defeats God of his aims in the creation of the rest, by putting them to uses that despite him meerly, stand in perfect opposition to his wisdom, holiness, and goodness, all his attributes, and work out nothing but disorder and destruction, and by consequence are bad and most displeasing to their Maker, and since these (as the other good ones were) are don discernedly and with deliberation and choice, they are therefore morally so. So that actions of men in themselves, and by the rules of nature, may be morally good and well pleasing in Gods sight, or the contrary.

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dering man in his own nature as a rational sociable creature, and relating to the place and station he fills in the Universe, his actions would be good or bad by disagreeing or conformity to that; and he that acts in opposition to it, is as mischeivous, yea as unnatural a thing as if one of the Elements of the world, or any cheif ingredient of its making, should have chang'd its operations, and by consequence not be it self, but the disorder and the pest of all the other. We seem indeed astonisht seeing heavy bodies to put off their nature and ascend, and we rack principles to find out causes: when the vicious man, that acts daily against his reason, is the same constant prodigy: the man, that pours down streams of intemperance, until they mount into the throne of reason and quench the little spark that's seated there, is as unnatural a thing as a stream climbing up a wall, and every Sinner is as much a monster as a stone falling upwards, do's as much against his nature, reason; is indeed a greater monster. For when those other things do leave their nature, 'tis either from some violence in the efficient; if water mount, 'tis by the force of engine or some other pressure, or, as some say, from violent impulses of a final cause: 'tis for the preservation of the whole community of natures; for if it be to avoid vacuities, it is so, and it do's against its own inclination, onely for the strong concern there is for the benefit of the Universe: but the wicked man, that lives against the dictates of right reason, his own nature, is urg'd to it by no violences but those of wilfulness, is pulst on by no engine but a naughty heart, nor hath he any higher ends that make impulse upon him, but he is onely passionate for unworthy ruine, violent for an unreasonable destruction.

The Heathens were so sensible of Natures obligation in man to live virtuously according to reason, that they call'd the doing so *ἀνδρῶν ἐπαγγελίαν*, as if there had bin an engagement to it in his very constitution and being: and his principles and frame did promise for him he should live so: and therefore ^a *Arrian* upon *Epiſt.* tells a man that did a thing injuriously or with passion and impetuosity, or but without consideration, or to gratify his lower appetites, *ἀπώλεις τὸ ἀνδρῶν, ἐκ ἐπλήρωσιν ἐπαγγελίαν*, *thou hast destroy'd the man in thee in having not kept nature's word, but broke the promise, which thy very being made for thee.* As if mans nature undertook as solemnly he would be virtuous, as the fire's nature does assure that it will burn.

But we who profess also to believe, that God made man in his own image, consequently must needs grant, that so far as he imprest on him the likeness of that nature, whose perfections, as they are most infinite and immutable, so they are a necessary and unchangeable rule of goodness to those beings that are transcripts of his being, so far therefore he hath planted in us rules of good, which since they are deriv'd from our supreme Lord and Creator, must have the force of law to us, and are that which the Scripture calls the *Law written in our hearts*, whose dictates (howsoever slightly vain men think of vertue, that it is but an emty name, or at the best but politic contrivance without any real grounds in nature) have yet their causes as eternal, are themselves as immutable, not onely as mans nature, but as Gods, of which mans is the draught and

image,

^a *Lib. 2. c. 9.*

image, and are justly call'd participations of those forme of goodness that are in God, of which they are the prints; and amongst them none more lively then the rule of Mercy, the thing that God do's prefer here, when he saies, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice.* Whence we observ'd, that amongst all those actions, which have an intrinsic honesty, and are of their own nature in themselves morally good, and well-pleasing to God, those of Mercy are in an especial manner such; the second thing I was to speak to, *for I will, saith he, have Mercy.*

The word here חסד signifies benignity, and by it is meant all love and kindness, the exercise of the habit of mind, that disposeth a man to do all the good he can to every man, in what condition soever. Now to prove that human nature hath implanted in it principles of universal kindness, and propensions to have friendship to, have pity on, do good to one another, I shall not urge what *S^r Paul saith, that *God made of one blood all the nations of the earth,* * Acts 17. 26. tho certainly in that one kindred there be an obligation to the dear affections of near relatives. But if all would grant that one blood, it would, I fear, prevail not much, for now adaies nearness of kindred is not apt to make close friendships and concernes for one another, if an interest chance to interpose: however one blood, when it is divided so and scatter'd, hath not force to warm and spirit strong affections or to cement much.

But this I will take confidence to urge, that in the latitude of creatures none is born with so much need of mercy, as a man: none wants so many helps to be brought forth, none leaves the parent, that did bear it and should nourish it, in so weak and helpless a condition, (I speak as to the generality,) 'tis merely others pity and assistance that they live: and then if mercy, others help be the most pressing and the first necessity of humane nature, the return of mercy, pitying and helping others is the first and the most pressing obligation on that nature. To go forward; as this state of infancy demonstrates nature did intend him for society, since without that 'tis not onely most impossible that he can be that rational creature, ever can exert the faculties of speech and the discourse of reason, which yet 'tis plain nature hath fitted him for; but also most impossible that he can be brought up to be so, when he is so, 'tis society alone that still preserves him, and 'tis onely mutual good offices that preserve society. *Nam quo alio tuti sumus quam quod mutuis juvamus officiis,* saith Seneca l. 4. de Benef. c. 18. and mans life subsists, is furnisht and rose onely by commerce of kindnesses, by helping one another: take him single, and what is he but the prey of any beast almost? *vilissimus & facillimus sanguis,* the cheapest blood and easiest to be spilt. Those creatures that are born in deserts, and born for them, are all arm'd, but nature gave no strength to man besides the kindness and assistances of other men; take away them, by which alone it do's subsist, and the whole kind must perish. But so far you labor to take them away, as you believe not to be good, kind, merciful, and assisting is not a thing of it self ill and unnatural, which it must needs be; and the contrary most natural, when as nature hath provided onely that, as instrument of its

security and preservation. So far is the accursed principle of self interest and of mans just right to do what e're he lists to others, howsoever mischeivous it be, if he conceive the doing of it useful to himself, from being any principle of nature, that the first voice of nature teacheth us the direct contrary. And whosoever he be that is, I will not say unjust to others, but not kind, friendly, and apt to do good to them; he that hath regard for onely self, and mesures all by his own inclinations and interests, is such a thing, if nature onely judg of him, asought to have bin expos'd when he was born, and to have no pity shew'd him, when in teares and in his blood he cri'd for it; he should be still abstain'd and separated from, as one whom Nature her self excommunicates, as one who is no part of human society, but the proper native and inhabitant of the desert. But he that is unrighteous, who by wrong whether of violence or fraud or but of debt makes his own satisfactions, that to serve his uses and occasions dares take, or but detain from others what is due to them, and supports his pomp and plenty with that, which of right ought to cloth and feed others; and so eats the bread and drinks the tears, and, may be, blood of Creditors; he that is so unmerciful as to be thus cruel, tho Almighty God were silent, even Nature would her self prosecute such a person with her out-cries, as we do fire, when 'tis broke out and rages, for he is all one; fire also spreads and seises all it can come near, whether mans or Gods house, to make fuel for it self and to encrease its blaze: so that the other should be lookt upon with the same dreads and abhorrency, for he is the same disorder in the frame of Nature, and in this the voice of Nature is the voice of God, which is our other medium to discover what is natural. Now since we have declar'd, that natural vertue is in man the imitation of God, is as it were the workings off of those forms of goodness that are in him, and the lines and rules of it are but the lineaments of his perfection, it will be easy to evince, that the rule for mercy is a most important law of Nature, since the practice of it is so natural to God himself. Now to prove this, passing by all other methods of probation, I shall content my self with that one declaration of himself he made, when he proclaim'd himself ^b *the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity transgression and sin, and that will by no means utterly cut off the guilty,* (so I understand it out of Jer. 46. 28.) *will not make a full end, a clear riddance of them, when I visit.* God seems here to have taken flesh in his expressions e're he was incarnate, that he might have words to phrase his goodness in: and he had bowels of mercy before he was made man, and yet all this, he says, are but the *back parts* of his goodness *Exod. 33. v. ult.* but that of it which we meet with in his dealings with the Sons of men, as we see it *a posteriori*, and in its effects here: but the face and glory of it was so bright and dazeling, that he tells his friend there *Moses*, that 'twas not possible for him *to see it and live.* Yet now *S^t Paul* saith, *God hath given us the light of the knowledg of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,* 2 Cor. 4. 6. Indeed there was Divinity of mercy, and more too; humanity was taken in, that God
Almighty

^b Exod. 34.
6, 7.

Almighty might be able to bestow more then himself, and all that he might shew compassion on us men. It seems, O Lord, thou wilt have *Mercy*, yea and *Sacrifice* too. If thou require such an offering, as the Sacrifice of thine own blood and of thine own Son, that thou mightest have mercy on us; and then let men dispute, that vindicative justice is essential to God, that sin and its punishment are annex by as unchangable necessity as Gods Attributes are to his being, and that by the express exigence of his nature he no less necessarily executes it, then the fire burns: we may well be content it should be so, when this strict necessity, if such there were, did but make way for, was subservient to the ends of infinite Mercy, and by that demonstrates, that benignity, compassion and forgiveness are much more the inclinations of his nature, and if he intended man in any thing his image, sure he did in mercy; therefore do's our Savior charge us, *be yee merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful*, who as he had no other reason to create the world, so 'tis most certain, that he had no other reason to redeem it. That Oeconomy was intended as the means of mercy to poor Sinners in reducing them, which is the Mercy my third observation speaks of, which was this; that of all acts of Mercy those are best and most well-pleasing in Gods sight, which are employ'd in the conversion of Sinners: that was such, for which our Savior is here pleading, when he saith, *I will have Mercy*.

But here I mean not such conversions as they are employ'd about, who compass sea and land, not so much to convert men from the evil of their waies, to the true real practice of Christianity, as to convert them to their Church: to which men would not go so fast, but that by the debauch of all good Christian discipline, there are such easy absolutions to be had, tho men be not converted from their evil waies; for it is impossible to find a Church or a Religion in the world, which men may sin so hopefully and comfortably in, as that of *Rome*, as it now stands. But these busy Agitators of conversion, besides that they convert not men to Catholic Christianity, but to a name, and indeed faction, have made *Catholic* a word of party: if they should multiply, we should soon find, they would have Sacrifice, not Mercy. I do not mean their Host, that *Sacrificium incruentum*, bloody Sacrifices, we know, are a main part of their doctrine and their practice, who have us'd to turn whole Nations into shambles for their Church's sake, and make bonfires with burnt-offerings of their fellow Christians. But waving these Conversions, those the proposition speaks of, are such, as reduce Sinners from their evil doings, to the universal faithful practice of all virtue and all piety.

Now of all acts of Mercy, that those, which endeavor this, are best, Nature herself would judg: since they do aim at reinstating man, the crown of all her workmanship, in the integrity and rectitude of Nature, which is his own true perfect state, and is therefore the most proper and best for him, as relating to that state. But God, who beyond that design'd to make man, who had fallen from his own nature, to *partake of the Divine Nature*, as *S^t Peter* saith *2 Pet. i. 4.* and in order to it *call'd us to glory and vertue, v. 3.* can-

e Ezech. 33.
11.

not but account that kindness, which endeavors the recovery of Sinners from corruption and misery, to the state of vertue, and so on to glory, and to be partakers of his Nature, as a kindness that is in great degree Divine. And certainly, if acts of Mercy be, as we have seen, so well pleasing to God, 'tis certain, that the acts of greatest Mercy must be most well-pleasing; and it is as certain, that those Mercies are the greatest, which releive from greatest miseries, and invest with highest blessedness: but the eternal happy preparations for the Penitent, and the as infinite and immortal torments, that await the Sinner, transcend all comparison with other things. Both of them indeed were propos'd in Mercy, Hell it self was threatned merely in compassion, to affright our passage, and to make our entry inaccessible. 'Tis true it must be executed on the final impenitent, that God may be true; he is engag'd in his veracity to inflict it, and yet he scarce knows how to do it, or to punish: *How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, O Israel? My heart is turn'd within me, my repentings are kindled together,* Hos. 11. 8. Since thou wilt not do it, not turn, not repent, sure I must, for *how shall I give thee up?* Yea he does it till that he be weary with repenting Jer. 15. 6. till he be in passion, so as that with oaths he does expostulate *as I live, saith the Lord, I would not the death of the wicked, --- turn ye, turn ye from your evil waies; for why will ye die:* yea more he sent his Son out of his bosom to prevent it. Would you know the value of that kindness, that endeavors to reform such Sinners, it was worth the Incarnation of the Son of God, *the Word was made flesh* purposely to call such to repentance: so my text saith, *I came to call Sinners to repentance.* But to call them to it, Lord! out of thine own mouth we will challenge more from thee; for thou didst answer to this very same reproch of being a guest to one that was a Sinner, *The Son of man came to seek and to save that which is lost* Luke 19. 10. not to call onely, but to seek; and how, he shews you in the Parable, chap. 15. v. 4, 5. *What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? and when he hath found it, he laieth it on his shoulders rejoicing.*

The Sinner he hath straid into by paths, gon away from the Shepherd of his soul, is a lost sheep; but yet when he is gon his farthest, is in mazes, knows not which way to betake himself, then this good Shepherd do's not onely call, invite to a return, or (as the Father in the Parable) run to meet him in his coming back, but goes himself to seek him, seems to mind the recovery of each single one that's lost, and contributes as carefully to his return, as if that one were all his charge, and the whole flock not dearer to him then that sheep, *he leaves the ninety and nine* to seek that one, and he seeks *till he finds it*, and then *laies it on his shoulders*: the wandering sheep it seems had straid till it was weary, and had tir'd it self with running from its Shepherd, so as that it neither could come nor be driven home; but that too is provided for, for therefore he is carried: that none, how far soever he hath gon away, may yet despair of coming back. This sheep had wandred to so great

great a distance, and to so much weariness, that he was fain to be born back, when he was found. Yea and the burden was most acceptable, for *he laid it on his shoulders rejoicing*: assure thy self he will refuse no burden for thy sake, who was willing to bear the Cross for thee; be but contented to be found by him, and he will carry thee with gladness, & the joy will spread it self to Heaven also, *v. 7. There is joy in heaven over one Sinner, that repenteth.* The kindness, that effects this, is worth a triumph in Gods presence among all, God, Angels; it is worth a passion of the Son of God, it is fit to make a joy in Heaven, and fit to make the Lord of Heaven descend to earth, and to the grave for it. Nor yet content with having don all this himself, he gave his Spirit to ordain and qualify a state of men to agitate this onely work to the worlds end. For saith ^d S^t Paul, *we are Ambassadors for Christ, as tho God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled to God.* 2 Cor. 5. 20.

I know not whether the Ambassadors are likely to prevail, in what the Son himself hath fail'd; and whether Gods beseeching us will do that, which his dying for us hath not yet bin able to effect; or whether they that come with the same Ambassy, have not reason to expect the same unkind reception: for it is no wonder, if that Message, which did cause *Christ* to be crucifi'd and his Heralds martyr'd, which was so unwelcome, that they shed the blood of intire Nations almost to extinguish it, and lay'd waft whole Regions to extirpate it, should not now be any whit more grateful: for without all doubt men love their vices now as well as ever, and indeed 'tis hard to love the men, that come to tear their bosome inclinations from their heart, whose words are corrosives and caustics, lances, sawes, and whatsoever other instruments, that serve to mortify and to cut off; men that design to sower all their satisfactions they have in the world, by throwing in the thoughts of present guilt and after torments, whom if they beleive not, they must needs despise, and hate them for assuming so to check and censure, lay such black dooms on their actions; if they do beleive them, they must needs be tortur'd by them, feel convulsions, wracks within at their discourses, and by consequence cannot much affect them. 'Tis hard not to be enemies to them, who, tho they say they come to treat a reconciliation, are Ambassadors of war, and whose commission 'tis *to cry aloud, not spare, but lift up their voice like a trumpet to proclaime defiance, sound a charge against them, and to shew the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.* ^{Isaiah 58. 1.} Now to be told of faults, to have ones bosome ript up, and the guilt displai'd, was hardly ever acceptable; good counsel, admonitions and reproofs never have bin welcome, and then how should they be so, whose office 'tis to bring them, and who are, as the Wise Man saith, *Ordain'd to reproving.* But 'tis as unhappy sure, as 'tis unreasonable to dislike the greatest kindnesses for being such; if mercy shall be thought to merit hate, because it is the highest mercy, what then shall oblige? The poor man does not scorn the garment that is sent to cloth his nakedness, or the food that is bestow'd upon his croaking, clinging bowels, tho the very almes betoken and discover the necessity, he hath yet no malice to his Benefactor

therefore: but the perishing naked soul thinks, he that labors to releive her wants, upbraids her with them, and the invitations therefore to the *Supper of the Lamb*, the offers of the *wedding garment*, of the *robe of Immortality* provoke her. Men allow the Physician yet to tell them of those maladies, that have guilt in them, and receive prescriptions from him of such methods of severity and discipline, as few would go thro to Heaven, and all this endears the man: but he that shall attempt an application to the vice, which is the cause of all this, to remove which is the onely possible way to secure from relapses, and the certain way to health and life eternal, he is judg'd a mortal enemy, as if there were nothing in the world so dear to men as their sins are, no kindneses, but what are shew'd to those, are grateful; that were true love that would see them, let them perish everlastingly, and not speak to them to direct them; as if all benefaction to the soul were injury, and the mercies, that have in them Heaven and Eternity, were meer de-fiances.

But how irksom however such conversations are, as by admonitions, or whatever other methods aim at the recovery of Sinners, they are the onely conversations with them that can be justified. For, which is the fourth and last thing that I am to speak to,

'Tis onely the opportunity and the design and hope of doing good to Sinners, by reforming them, that can make familiar converse with them excusable and lawful; I mean where the duty of a Relation does not oblige to it.

And first, I will not give my self the trouble to find out a law of God among the *Jews* forbidding to converse at all with Heathens, and by consequence with open Sinners, which might give occasion to this question of the *Pharisees*, since *S^t Peter* tells *Cornelius Acts 10. 28. Ye know, that it is an unlawful thing for a man, that is a Jew, to keep company, or come unto one of another Nation*: and our Savior, when he would prescribe the distance, which his censures were to make men keep, from any refractory Sinner, words it, *let him be unto thee as an Heathen or a Publican*, as supposing they were not to company with those; and in the Text he also reckons the observance of that distance from all Sinners as a duty, calls it *Sacrifice*, and justifies his doing otherwise by this plea onely, that he came to them *to call them to repentance*. But if a command be call'd for, we have several, *1 Cor. 5. 11. Now I have written to you, not to company, if any man, that is call'd a brother, i. e. professeth himself a Christian, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one no not to eat, and the like: 2 Thess. c. 3. v. 14. If any man obey not our word, note that man, and have no company with him; adding v. 15. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother*. The Converse is therefore lawful onely, as an opportunity of admonition. For

Secondly, if it be lawful otherwise, I might ask, for whom? not for the Clergy-man most certainly, whose calling it is to admonish, and he is false and trecherous to his office, as well as his company, if he do not, who is set God's Watchman, to give notice of approaching dangers, & who is responsible for every soul that perisheth
for

for want of warning; nor the Magistrate, who if he see vice, by his office is as much oblig'd to punish it, as the Clergy-man to preach against it. He also is *the Minister of God to execute wrath*, as the other is to denounce it, whose easiness is much more baneful then the others silence, and makes all those faults, which by not punishing it does encourage, and by that is more unmerciful to the community then arbitrary tyranny, and is guilty of that blood it does forbear to shed; and as not for these, so not for any one, since reproofs and admonitions have bin the duty of every person from the beginnings of Religion *Lev. 19. 17. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him.* Silence then in Gods esteem is enmity, not to reprove perfect hatred; and indeed to labor to preserve a man from perishing eternally does look like kindness: but if this kindness be too sower, and sullen for this present age that will not bear correction, and in opposition to Gods judgment-calls that hatred, looks upon it as a provocation and affront, and answers it with a defy, and with the retributions of a mortal injury; yet there are commands

Thirdly, which God hath made as fences merely to secure our virtue, charging both in general of Sinners: *My son, walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their path* Prov. 1. 15. and also in particular of almost every sin: *Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go; lest thou learn his waies, and get a snare to thy soul*, Prov. 22. 24, 25. and *look not upon the wine when it sparkles: and sit not by a woman &c.* so that merely to converse with these solicitations to sin is the breach of commands, which commands if they should be onely methods of security, not rules of express duty, yet not to observe them is to slight the onely Antidote Gods wisdom could prescribe against contagion, and that man, that do's so, do's assume to guard himself, and so devests himself of the protection of Gods Grace and Holy Spirit; and then, if he fall, he is not onely guilty of the fault that he commits, but of wilful contemptuous refusal of the means of preservation from it, of design indeed to make the sin unavoidably to himself: for such familiarities express, that he desires to be engag'd in the necessity of sinning. For he that does invite the danger, and converse, and play with the temptation, can have no other ends, but to be ensnar'd and taken.

Now judg of your selves, I pray you, whether he that do's require to pluck out the right eye, if it offend, and cut off the right hand and foot, that with such torment to our selves we should bereave our selves of those so useful organs, whether for the ornament or the necessities of our being, if we find that we shall be betrai'd by them, and who requires it on this penalty, that otherwise we shall be cast with both ours eies, and hands, and feet into Hell fire; whether he be likely to excuse the conversation with those objects, that engage our eies, and poyson our souls thro them; or else will allow me, by thrusting my self thus into temptations, to lay violent hands upon sin and destruction, who commands me to cut off my hand rather then touch vice. Or else will he give me leave to run into
the

the snare, who bids me cut my foot off rather than be taken; sure he suppos'd we would be willing of our selves to divorce and tear our selves from the allurements and occasions, who thought it unnecessary to prescribe such easy remedies as to avoid them, and requires of us, that when the allurements shall surprize, or force themselves upon our senses, we tear out the organ rather than yeild and be overcome. Or he thought at least, that altho the companions of my vices are grown dearer to me than mine own eyes, their converse more useful and more necessary to my satisfaction than my hand or foot is to me, yet to pluck out, cut off, and cast all from me.

But were I proof against temptation, and perfectly secure from the contagion of such conversation, yet 'tis

Fourthly, less excusable in respect to Gods concern than any other. To sit and see vertue not onely violated and deflower'd with loose unclean discourses, but like *Thamar* then thrust out of doors, despis'd, Religion scott, and turn'd in ridicule; all that is Holy laugh'd at and profan'd, and Gods Lawes vilifi'd, his Word burlesqu'd and droll'd upon, his Name blasphem'd and himself rail'd, curst, renounc't, yea and deni'd a being; and hearing this, I do not say to find delight and entertainment in this sort of company; for none, but those that are of reprobate minds, can do that possibly, take pleasure in that which hath nothing in the world to recommend it, but the boldness of the villany: but to sit patient without any least sense of resentment, as one that had not any least concern for God Almighty's honor or his being, is ingratitude to such a bulk and brutishness of guilt, as is beyond the power and art of aggravation, or indeed expression. It was not onely death by Gods Law to dishonor or blaspheme his Name, but at the hearing it, tho but in repetition by a Witness, all the *Jews* that were in hearing were oblig'd to rent their garments, as their Laws assure us in their *Talmud*. Yea we find the Courteers in *Isaiah* 36. 22. coming with their cloths rent to King *Hezekiah*, to report the words of *Rabshakeh* an Alien, who but in a message from his own King had spoken sleightly of their God; and the High Priest, whom it was forbid to in most cases, in such did it. And one would think that it should rent our hearts, of which the other was but a Symbolic Ceremony, and implied that duty. To hear one slight tho but by inadvertency a person, whom some one or other of the company hath the least relation, or but any little obligation to, requires that person by the laws of honor indispensably to call for reparation. To touch the reputation of a Mistress, or what's worse, and own'd to be so, ought, they say, to be no otherwise then fatally resented: and these are accounted such just causes of mens indignation, that a man that's unconcern'd, will take it for a glory to be second in them, and he that never had the honor to be drunk in the man's company, will venture to be kill'd and to be damn'd for him in such a quarrel: Therefore every man, unless he do design to quarrel purposely, does think himself bound to forbear offences of such kind in company, where any one's oblig'd in honor, or by rules that men have set it, to take notice of it. Now tho it were
prodigious

prodigious insolence to urge in parallel to this, that it should seem that God Almighty is not thought so much a friend to any, none have such relation to him, nor on any account have reason to be so concern'd for him, or for his honor, that men should forbear him in their company: yet it seems dreadful after such plenties of his blessings, Miracles of kindness in stupendous rescues and deliverances; where, to pass by all those Mercies that concern Eternity, his temporal preservations have contested with our provocations, and overcome them, and so often that they have out numbered all our hours, and all other numbers, but our sins: that these endearments should not yet be able to oblige us so far, as to move us, when we hear his Laws or his Religion, or his Word and Name, or himself dishonor'd, to desire them to forbear that God, that hath bin so kind to us; or if that be judg'd unmannerly by the Sword-men, yet at leastwise by uneasiness and by withdrawing to assure them, that we cannot bear the hearing it. God did once say in a severe threatening determination, *Those that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteem'd.* 1 Sam. 2:30. Go ye and learn, what that means; consider, I say, and *the Lord give you understanding in all things.*

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SER:

S E R M O N

IV.

Of Gods method in giving Deliverance.

Psalm 102. 13, 14.

Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for the time to favor her, yea the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof.

According to the version us'd in the Liturgy:

Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for it is time that thou have mercy upon her, yea the time is come. And why? thy servants think upon her stones, and it pitieth them to see her in the dust.



HE address of this text is not ordinary; they use to be directed to men for their instruction and practice: but this do's treat with God, seems to prescribe to and appoint him: and now not to excuse this by a plea, that since men have bin deaf to all addresses from this place, that have bin made unto them, 'tis time to change the method; and seeing we cannot persuade men, try if we can in that sense of St Paul's words persuade God: but to say for our selves when human wisdom cannot find expedients for us, and our distresses are beyond the succors of their power or their counsel, 'tis fit then to betake our selves to God, to plead with the Lord, and never let him rest; and when the help of man is vain, to cry out, *O be thou our help*; and with holy confidence, *thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Sion.*

Indeed addresses to God use to be made otherwise, in a petitionary form at least; and it would seem much more to become us, if we humbly beg'd, *Arise, O God, have mercy upon Sion*: yet this here in the Text is such a form as does need nothing else, but faith in the Petitioner to make it acceptable. There is some difference in the reading of the latter verse, the one version rendring, *for why? thy servants think upon her stones, and it pitieth them to see her in the dust*: the other thus, *for thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof*: yet this is easily reconcil'd, *they think upon her stones*, indeed with sorrow for, acknowledgments of their demerits, which did call down this calamitous condition, and being passionately thus

thus affected with the sense of it, they willingly receive, contentedly and cheerfully accept this punishment of their iniquity, this return of their demerits רצו את-אכנדר: and since it is on their account, namely thro their demerit that she is so low, since they are sensible themselves did make her fall into the dust, they cannot chuse but be more tender; love, and pity her the more, and be more willing to do what they can to raise her up, *pulverem ejus a Jud. Lev. evehere cupiunt.*

In the words there is an holy confidence, that God will grant the thing they long for, *mercy to Sion: thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Sion.*

^{2^{dly}} A Reason of that Confidence; for the time of shewing favor, the appointed time for it is come.

^{3^{dly}} A ground for that, because thy servants think upon her stones, and it pitieth them to see her in the dust. In handling which I shall consider

1. The Stones of Sion, and those in the dust, or at least in great danger of impendent ruin.

2. That tho God is not alwais minded to succor his own Sion, yet he hath set appointed times for that.

3. That when the Sons of Sion are affected towards her as the Text expresses, then is usually Gods season for deliverance, his time of mercy and of shewing favor, then the appointed time for it is come; and then we may take holy confidence, and in full assurance of faith say, *Thou shalt arise.*

First of the Stones of Sion, and those in the dust. Sion was, we know, either the City of the King, where there was the seat of Judgment, the thrones of the house of David, Psalm 122. 5. or else it was the mountain of the Lords house; and so the stones of Sion are either the stones of the seat of Judgment, of the Throne in the dust; or the stones of the Lords house, the Sanctuary there. Both these therefore might be treated of, and I shall speak to both, but more particularly to the later. And those stones may be either taken naturally, as they are the stones of a material Sanctuary; or else mystically, in that sense they often have in Scripture, which saies, *we as lively stones are all built up a Spiritual house.* 1 Pet. 2. 5.

1. The itones of Sion the material Sanctuary in the dust the Psalmist thought an object for so much pity, that some Psalms are but the Liturgies of his pious resentments upon that occasion. Psalm 74. is full herein, *Think upon Mount Sion, where thou hast dwelt; lift up thy feet, that thou maiest utterly destroy every Enemy, which hath don evil in thy Sanctuary, Thine Adversaries roar in the midst of thy Congregations, and set up their banners for tokens: they break down all the carved work thereof with axes and hammers, they have set fire upon thy holy Places, and have defil'd the dwelling place of thy name even unto the ground; yea they said in their hearts, let us make havock of them all together.* It is not many years since this was our complaint, concerning both the house of God and of the King, the Church and Monarchy, as if the life of one were bound up in the others life. We saw Gods honor, at least the place where his honor dwelt, laid in the dust; nor was it suffer'd to stay there, the stones of Sion not

allow'd to find a place for burial in that dust, which is the common grave: the Church it self had not a Monument, nor the tombs a sepulcher; but the very ruins were disquieted, the rubbish troubled, and the stones and dust suffer'd a deportation, us'd as if men thought with them to build a Sanctuary for those Sins that demolisht them, and make a Refuge for their Sacrilege. 'Tis true, to many this seem'd no sad spectacle, nor would it now to such, as think any occasional room, of the lowest name and usage, might do as well for the uses of Gods service. Strange! when there was never a Religion in the world, that did acknowledg any sort of God, but would allot some place peculiar to his worship: with them whose deities were Sicknesses, the Feaver had its Temple. Yea and stranger, in a world that does devote set rooms to every use of nature, of convenience, and of pleasure; the recreations have a place made for them, and the meanest instruments of sport have so; meals have one, and feasts have another, luxury hath its offices, State hath many; chambers, antichambers, and withdrawing places, merely because there may be so many rooms of which there is no use, for that is Pomp: if God should not have one too, for all uses that relate to him, to meet us in with all his train of Angels, and to bless us, and to entertain us with the food of heaven, with himself. But whether men desire it so again, yet so it lately was; and when his table was remov'd, his entertainment too was laid aside, and the Sacrament become as desolate as the Altar, Gods houses & his mysteries too in the dust, *God did arise*. I cannot chuse but see that we have no such object of resentment now, but how much farther off it is from being thus at this time, and how much less apposite to our condition at this present, the discourse is so much greater demonstration of what my Text affirms, that when Gods honor is affronted thus, and his house vilified and ruin'd, then the time for favor, the appointed time is come; and when the stones of *Sion* are thrown down into the dust, his Servants humbled too into the dust with sorrow and resentments, then God *shall arise*; for so he did.

It was so also, if we look upon the Stones of *Sion* in their mystical and figurative sense. Now altho every sincere Christian, every one in whom, on the foundation of a true sound faith, an holy life is superstructed, be not onely in ^b *S^t Peters words a lively stone*, but in ^c *S^t Pauls a Temple*, yet more properly the whole community of Christians is in Scripture represented to us as the body of a building. *S^t Peter* tells them, *ye are built up a Spiritual house*, *1 Pet. 2. 5.* and *S^t Paul* saith, *built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles. Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly fram'd together groweth up a holy Temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are built up together for an habitation of God thro the Spirit. Eph. 2. 20, 21, 22.* The ends for which 'tis call'd so, seem indeed more lively represented in the parallel resemblance of a natural body *Rom. 12. 1 Cor. 12. 12.* and that body the body of Christ *Eph. 1. 23.* or that of which he is the head *Col. 1. 18.* from which all Christians do receive their life and motion, their increase and strength, no otherwise then as they are united and tied by joints and nerves

nerves to one another and that head *Eph. 4. 16.* and have all one Spirit also *1 Cor. 12. 13.* Of all which expressions as one end is to enforce such unity in the profession of their faith, and communion in Gods public worship among Christians, as there is unity and communion between the several parts of one same person, that their union in it should be so strict, that all their assemblies for it should make but one body with one spirit; so another end is to assure that as in one same body there are several parts for several uses, without which it could not be an organiz'd, complete animal body, so in the one body of Christ the Church too there are ^d several ministeries, offices, *d 1 Cor. 12. 5, 6.* and powers, some more noble, others more inferior; and the whole body may aswell be all eie, as each member in the Church a Seer, every part be tongue, as every man a Teacher: *S^t Paul* from that Analogy deducing a necessity of several parts, and their subordination also in that *1 Cor. 12. v. 28.* and accordingly, saith he, God hath set several orders, *first Apostles, after Prophets, Teachers, helps* or ministerial offices, *and governments*; without which governments and which diversity 'tis as impossible it can subsist, as for a body to see without an eie, or speak without a tongue, consult, direct and call it self without a brain or understanding. Yet this same is exprest all in the other body of a building, which my text relates to; for *Eph. 4. 11. Christ gave also some Apostles, and some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors, and some Teachers, for the perfecting the Saints,* compacting & holding Christians together in assemblies for Gods public worship; *for the work of the ministry, for the edifying,* or building up *of the body of Christ.* Now this embleme to the body of a building (as the other) is a type of Unity, but yet of several and subordinate stations in the Churches unity. For stones however excellently squar'd & fitted, are yet no parts of the structure, till they be cemented to the rest that lean on the foundation; the number possibly may make a heap, but not a frame until they be dispos'd and order'd in their several stations; for there are such in this body also, every hewn stone cannot be a pinnacle nor corner stone: so in the Church all are not capable of the same ministeries, offices, or powers. And yet we may remember when it was so; all assum'd all, seiz'd the offices, usurpt the powers, executed all the ministeries, all subordination was demolisht, order broken, Governments under foot, *the stones of the Sanctuary pour'd out in the top of every street,* as ^e *Jeremy* laments; the *Urim* and the *Thummim*, stones that *e Chap. 41.* gave the heavenly Oracles, lost in ruins. Now then God to make good the promis'd method of his Providential mercies, when it was thus, when these stones of *Sion* were in the dust, the Ephod and the Priests thrown into it, and the Priesthood and the Fathers of it, the whole life, with all its offices and powers dying, almost all that could continue it being laid in the dust, and *Sions* Enemies expecting the expiring of the Order: then the appointed time was come, and God not onely did himself arise, but made a resurrection of the Church too, and from the dust these stones were again most miraculously built into a Spiritual House.

I cannot but acknowledg that the breaches which this desolation made were not wholly made up, nor were well cemented, and

f Matth. 16.
18.

as uncemented breaches use to do, decaid more and more daily; what arts were us'd to keep them open, yea to widen them, by whom, for what ends too, is so evident I shall not touch it. But 'tis sure we had not much face, had no great appearance of the bodies, that the Scripture represents the Church by: for in those that were before broke off from her, there was no subordination, nor no order, nor no unity; every broken & divided piece of ruin took upon it self to be the entire building, the whole body; every Faction was Christs Church, each Assembly was his flock, his Congregation, when indeed it was onely a Spiritual riot. And when things were dispos'd thus, then at once to break down all the poor remainders, he that takes his place to whom Christ said, *'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church,* who yet, as not content to thrust Christ out from being the alone foundation, *then which none can lay another true one* 1 Cor. 3. 11. would be the *chief head stone in the corner also, on which whosoever should fall, shall be broken; but on whosoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder* Matth. 21. 44. He, I say, in confidence of that success attempts this on the Reformation, and particularly on this, as they thought, tottering Church, to lay her stones all in the dust. And truly such the instruments employ'd are, that humanely speaking it must seem impossible to be avoided. For in Gods name, under the Autority of Religion, with the greatest Sacredness that can be, they contrive the bloudest, most irreligious, most inhumane murders, treasons, & assassinations imaginable, make the holy Eucharist the bond of their confederacy in those so tremendous villanies, Christs blood becomes the very obligation both to commit, & not confess them; for which end they say and swear even at the point of death, and upon their Salvation prov'd and confest fallhoods. Now what security or guard can mankind have against such, whom no ties of Religion or humanity have any force on? Whether these be the doctrines of their Church, tho that be true in most part, yet it matters not to them who are to be massacred, if they be the constant practices, and if they have such guides of conscience as can satisfy, and thereupon engage the instruments that must effect them to those practices. How they do that, I must confess, seems strange; for they yet look upon those actions, as for which they would have absolution, therefore sins. For tho there have bin dispensations sent from *Rome*, permitting them to promise, swear, subscribe, and do what else should be requir'd of them, so as in mind they did continue firm, and us'd their diligence to advance the *Roman* faith in secret; yet such dispensations might be intercepted, as those were in 1580. and brought to King *James* in *Scotland*, and so might discover plots if they were us'd to give them in such occasions: besides that they would stare the head of that Church in the face, betray his being privy to, and abetting those designs of blood, which now, if they miscarry, they can cast at first upon some private Desperado's, and then after lye & laugh them out of mens belief. Such dispensations therefore being not to be expected still, they took other ways. For seven years after, *Sextus V.* offering by the Bishop of *Dunblain* to that King a marriage with the *Infanta* of *Spaine*, if he would become a Catholic, as he call'd it, and

and join with them against the *English*; and this being mightily *g Jesuits Ca-*
resisted by the then Lord Chancellor, which made that ineffectual, *tech. l. 3. c. 2.*
and who was their constant adversary, Father *William Chrichton*, who
had sometime bin the Rector of the *Jesuits* at *Lyons* and came thi-
ther with *Dunblain*, solicited one *Bruce*, who also had bin brought
up by the *Jesuits*, and who was the *Spanish* Agent then imploi'd for
ships there (which that Duke intended should be join'd with, and
assist in their Armada) solicited him very oft for mony to procure
the murder of the Chancellor, which he had contriv'd by several
ways; but being still deni'd, at first because his mony was not tru-
sted to him for those purposes, he could not justify such disbursement;
another time because, as to the sin, it was all one to kill a man with
his own hands, or to give mony to procure it; and that he for his
part was a private person, and had no Authority over the life of any
man, and less over that of the Chancellor, who was a chief man in
the execution of the Justice of the Land: and afterwards because
the question was about advancement of Christian Religion; now this,
he thought, would ruinate the same, in as much as men went about
to promote it by murder to the great scandal of all. But finding
himself still importun'd more, he demanded of the Father, whether
in good conscience he might consent to that enterprize, or whether
he could dispense therewithal; to which the *Jesuit* repli'd, that
he could not, but that the murder being committed, and he
coming to confess himself unto him, he would absolve him of it.
It seems they thought they had no further power then. Now
Bruce's answer, tho not much concerning my part in this subject,
yet it was so honest, and the consequence so strange, that I shall
not pass it. He repli'd, sith your Reverence acknowledgeth that
I must confess my self of it, you also thereby acknowledg that I
should commit a sin; and I for my part know not whether, when I
have don it, God would give me grace and inable me to confess it:
Besides I verily believe, that the confession of a sin, which a man
hath don of set purpose intending to confess himself thereof, and
to have absolution for it, is not greatly available; and therefore
the surest way for me is not to put my self into such hazard: so it
ended. But he ran into another hazard; for the Duke of *Parma*
dying, and the Count *Fuentes* Nephew to the Duke of *Alva* in his
place, *Chrichton* accus'd *Bruce* before him, that he was a Traitor,
because he would not disburse mony to cause the Lord Chancellor
to be slain, and the process had its course, he not denying the thing,
and after fourteen months affliction was at last onely releas'd, with-
out repair of his good name or damages.

But passing by this, it seems they had no other snare to draw
them in, could give them no assurance then, but in that hopes of af-
ter absolution, which prov'd insufficient; for they found themselves
ingag'd in, and must wilfully commit crimes at the point of death,
of which they could not live to be absolv'd. I do not instance in
the perjuries of Father *Garnet*, tho with horrible execrations. He
cry'd mercy after; saying, that he had not thought they could have
prov'd the contrary: and he might have absolution. But *Tresham*,
just when dying, did deny on his Salvation things concerning
Garnet

Garnet; which he had confest before, and *Garnet* did himself confests too after, yea and several others of their own perswasion unexceptionable persons also swore. The same words are now current in the mouths of those that suffer, notwithstanding the express Oaths of their Complices: as if they thought the vertue of their Sacrament were such, as that when men confests'd themselves of their intended villanies, it absolv'd them of them e're they did them, and of all the sins they should think needful to commit in the effecting them. Yea more, if they should discover or confests ought tho dying, then that vertue of the Sacrament retir'd, the absolution became void & unuseful, the Sins recoil'd upon them, of which otherwise it made them innocent, which gives them confidence on their Salvation at the point of death to deny matters of known fact, which 'tis not imaginable that they could do on any other, save on that account. And that it is so, I have one irrefragable instance of one executed lately for a murder of that kind in *Ireland*, which is assur'd by persons of best credit in that Nation, who tho upon flagrant evidence condemn'd, deni'd the fact at his death on his Salvation with deep execrations as he at the place of execution went to be turn'd off; but it pleas'd God that the rope brake presently, and he soon reviv'd, but in the greatest horror in the world; for having with such desperate execrations deni'd his own deliberate fact, and renounc'd his Salvation, he openly acknowledg'd the falsity of his former asseverations, and own'd his being really guilty of what was charg'd upon him; and blessing God for giving him those moments by so strange a way to disburthen himself of such deliberate wilful perjury, declar'd that his Confessor, when he absolv'd him, told him, if he did discover it, that absolution would not profit him, & that he should be damn'd; but if he did not, then he was forgiven. Such monstrous practices are made good & sanctified, as they contribute to the laying our poor *Sion* in the dust; for we have ever bin the mark of all their mischeifs. Since *Pius* the V. Bull, it was observ'd there never past four years all *Queen Elizabeth's* reign without a most ^b pernicious plot for the subversion of the State and Church; and in the first years of King *James* not four months ⁱ without Treason: & they go now by the same rules, & in the same methods, with the same Oaths, & the same Sacraments administred to the same purposes. And just as they, somtimes designing open force, & somtimes private treasons & assassinations; somtimes trying by the softer pleas of Liberty of Conscience, toleration to do it, yea altho it be but partial, an Indulgence to our own Sects, any thing that may contribute to the breaches of our *Sion*, & may keep them open: which 'tis said (whether in earnest or to colour Blacker purposes, & hide designs more violent) is now spoken of, and they hope for, and hath still bin pleaded for, as the birthright of each Christian, as instated on them in the very charter of their Christianity. But yet to speak to that too, I neither find the word in Scripture, nor the thing, as most men take it, for the Liberty of Action: and besides this, whatever Arguments there are that press it, they can be no Arguments for the Romanist, who never grants it; for either they conclude or they do not; if not, why do they urge them? if they do, why

^b Proceed. Q.

ⁱ Proceed. R.

why do they not allow them? if they can see no force in them, then they must not use them; if they can, they must be wrought on by them: unless to be the onely men that may do wrong and resist reason, be their grant and Charter. But not to evade onely, I allow

1. That Christ came down to settle his Religion, plant the Christian Faith without a grant from, or the leave of Secular Powers; when he commissioned his Apostles to convey the Gospel thro the world, they did expect or ask no Pass-port from the several Princes, but in opposition to the Magistrates and Governors and Kings, against whom he promis'd them to justify and bear them out, they preach'd it. I allow too

2. That he autoriz'd and gave right to Christians, as such, to assemble for Gods Worship and Service according to the rule of his Religion, whatever prohibition, threats, or persecution they should meet from Secular powers on account of doing so. Accordingly the ^k Apostles and their Converts did so, and *S^t Paul* ^{k Acts 4. 5. &c.} gives it in charge to the *Hebrews* not to forbear doing so for any fear or suffering whatsoever, ^l *not forsaking the assembling of your* ^{l Hebr. 10. 25.} *elves together, as the manner of some is.* Now he that does require that they shall do so, notwithstanding any opposition from the Secular Powers, gives them right to do so, tho in opposition to those Powers: for all must have a right to do their duty, and accordingly the Christians of the first Ages did meet for Gods Worship against all the edicts, all the persecutions of the Heathen Emperors. But

3. Tho our Savior by this grant seems to pass by those Powers unregarded, or at least not taken notice of, when he gives their Subjects Privilege to meet in public full assemblies (such as those of Christians ought to be) without their leave, yea and against their orders, yet does not this grant diminish or intrrench upon their safety in the least: because the onely men he gives it to are such, as can design or do no hurt to any Government. For Christ conferr'd this privilege merely on the account of that Religion which he instituted, and to men as his Disciples and Followers in it. Now himself so renounc'd all pretence to any Secular interest or power, practis'd such obedience to his Governors tho most unjust, taught such subjection to all in Authority whether good or bad, Patrons or Enemies to the Religion, nursing Fathers to his Followers or Slaughtermen and Executioners; and hath made all this so much the temper and the constitution of Christianity, which condemns all enterprising upon any rights of others, and much more of Princes, that it is impossible that companies of such men, that is, of such Christians, such to whom alone Christ gives the privilege of meeting, can create a danger or a jealousy in any State: men that must indeed assemble, but must not resist, act, or contrive against their Governors, but die, if they and laws will have it so, for that their meeting. So the Primitive Christians did: so 20000 in one day at ^m *Nicomedia* for assembling. But men whose Principles or former ^{m See Martyrol, on Christmas day. Nicoph. l. 7. c. 6.} practices upon their principles have any thing that tends to sedition in them, especially if they have us'd such meetings to foment it; or tho they did not that, the other also, till they can give such fe-

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curity as will satisfy the state, of which the State is to judg, can no more by their Christian birth-right, by Christs whether grant or injunction of assembling for Gods Worship, claim a privilege of such assemblies, then notoriously sinful, scandalous Christians, or then open Heretics can by vertue of that same injunction claim the privilege of the public Assemblies till they satisfy the Church: for the Church may excommunicate these, and the State may restrain those others, and they have no right or plea in conscience against it. The rights he gave were given to men so far, as they should follow the Religion which he instituted; he gave no more privilege to the seditious, then the scandalous. He did not by requiring such assemblies for religious Worship mean to weaken the security of Governments, which his Religion is above all other institutions fram'd to settle and establish: which therefore by the grant of Christs Religion, as well as by a right inherent in their office, Governors may take care to provide for by restraints of that kind, not at all examining mens pretension, whether their Religion or their Principles be true or false; for that were endless and to no effect, every mans Religion and his Principles are true to himself; but onely if they tend towards commotions, or give cause of jealousy, which still Governors must judg of. Which if they cannot satisfy, they can plead no Privilege, to which they have no further right, then as they free themselves from such suspicions. In fine they cannot claim this on account of Christianity, since Christianity admits of nothing, that is prejudicial or gives fear to Governments; but is the basis of Obedience, the cement of Society, Ecclesiastical and secular, it compacts all the Stones of *Sion*, of the House of God, and of the seat of *David*, of the Sanctuary, and the Throne.

And therefore in the 4th place *Romanists* (and 'tis the same of every other Sect of men, so far as they abet such Principles, or have ever shew'd themselves in prosecution of them,) but *Romanists* for instance at the present, who by all ways of assurance have convinc'd the world, the most destructive Tenets, to government most abhorrent from the state of Christianity, are their Principles, & their Faith; as namely by the general dictates of their Schole-men, their allow'd Theology of their Canonists: their allow'd Laws of a shole of particular Councils and some general their allow'd Rule of Faith: of their Popes their infallible Judg; and what's worse by multitudes of practices the most inhumane that were ever heard of, and would never yet, however call'd on or accus'd, retract or sentence; but still justify and practise them. Since they therefore know themselves incapable of claiming Toleration by the Laws of Christianity, we can interpret them to mean no other thing by claiming and endeavoring it, but to get more opportunities to destroy the Government both of Church and State, to widen and to make more breaches in the gaping, tottering walls of *Sion*, tumble down her stones into the dust, and make their dust their grave. Nor need I discourse, how others turn these mercies into gall and bitterness; to contrive for parties and widen their own interests, and the breaches of the Government; the outcry for liberty ending alwaies in its denial of it to all besides themselves.

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Such is our prospect of the stones of *Sion*; it looks fatal, but it hath this Argument of comfort in it, that when *Sion* is in this condition that it is usually Gods time of mercy and of shewing favor, then *the appointed time for it is come*, the next thing that I am to speak to.

That this is ordinarily Gods time of appearing to shew mercy, is notorious from *Dauids* challenging his aids elsewhere upon the same account *Psal. 119. 126. It is time for thee, Lord, to work*, or it is time for Thee to put to thine hand, *for they have made void thy Law*. And we shall find a reason for this way of working in that prayer of the same King *David*, *Help me O Lord my God; O save me according to thy mercies, that they may know that this is thy hand, and that thou, Lord, hast don it*. When our distresses are beyond the succors of mens power and counsels, if deliverance come, we must needs know 'tis from above. The Prophet speaks of men, as apt to *sacrifice to their net, and burn incense to their drag* with which they catch, ascribing their successes to themselves. But when the Apostles use their net all night and can take nothing, then if one upon the shore, whom they know not, bid them cast in, and they do catch, strait one of them crieth out, *it is the Lord*. When out of a desperate condition of affairs we see hope drawn, we know it is the day spring from on high.

Whatever several of the late discoverers of the Popish conspiracy may have said or don to disparage their evidence, and the credit of what they testify; or men Popishly affected have contriv'd to make it be believ'd; yet surely while the trial and the letters of the late apostate busy Factor for the party remain upon record, it will be manifest as the light, that there was a practice and endeavor to subvert the present establishment in Church and State, and introduce the superstition and tyranny of *Rome* among us. And that God will be further gracious in the sending forth his light to discover, and to disappoint their dire attempts, there is ground to hope, because it always was the ordinary method of his working, making the day of Extremity the day of Salvation.

1. In the *Jewish* Church and Nation. And here I shall not mention their deliverance from the *Egyptian* bondage, tho it be a demonstration of my Proposition, but name that from the designs of *Haman*, who had satisfied the King, their Laws, and their Religion, and their Worship differ'd from those of all people, *ὅτι ἄνθρωποι ἄλλοι οὐκ ἔχουσιν τὴν αὐτὴν ἑσπέρην καὶ νόμον καὶ ἑθνη*, saith *Josephus*, and that were still occasions to embroile the State; that if he would give order they should be destroy'd, he would bring *10000 talents*, near two millions of our money, into the Exchequer: whereupon the King allows him to make what declarations he shall please against them, and signs an Edict to his Governors and his Lieutenants for the massacring the whole Nation; which might easily be don, the *Jews* then being in captivity, and mixt among them. *Mordecai* adviseth *Ester* to present herself before the King, remonstrate the injustice of the fact: that being death to do, she would decline it; but as one acquainted with Gods methods *Mordecai* does answer her, *think not with thyself, that thou shalt escape in the Kings house more then all the Jews*; for

for if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, (here is a pregnant instance of the assurance of my text) but thou and thy fathers house shall be destroy'd. And who knoweth whether thou art come to the Kingdom for such a time as this ? Hereupon she and her Nation fast and pray, and she adventures, and God gives her favor with the King, and he reverses all; and the whole Nation on that very day it was to perish is secur'd, and the design returns upon their heads that plotted it, on all their Enemies. I need name no more, but there is one pregnant one, on which there lies an imputation from great men : I mean, when throout that Nation their Religion was so persecuted, that it was almost extinct, false Heathen worship planted in its place, possessed the Temple and the Sanctuary, and all was profan'd by *Antiochus Epiphanes* : the state so lively propheci'd of by the Prophet *Daniel*. Now when it was thus, & there was so universal a defection, as already had subverted the whole Government, Religion, and almost the whole Nation, God stirs up the Spirit of the *Maccabees*, & on that day three years that all was profan'd, 'twas again purified and they deliver'd. I instance so, least that which *Grotius* saith, that nothing can defend that action of the *Maccabees*, besides extreme certain necessity ; and what our *Thorndike* saith, 'tis manifest the Arms which they took up against their lawful Sovereign, are by God approv'd, and their Faith commended *Hebr. 11.* least these should misguide men, it may be seasonable to declare that it is plain *Antiochus Epiphanes*, altho he * call that land his Kingdom, was not then their rightful King : for after *Alexanders* death, the first that got possession of it, was the King of *Egypt*. It was after violently taken indeed from him by the King of *Syria*, & the Jews gave up themselves to the protection of *Antiochus* the Great ; but he gave it in dowry to the King of *Egypt* with his daughter, & so parted with all right ; & whatever right the Kings of *Syria* could be suppos'd to have, *Antiochus Epiphanes* had none of that, as being not a lawful King of any place, usurping from his Nephew the right Heir : and with all injurious angry violence, when he was driven out of *Egypt*, he attacks *Jerusalem*, and enters it, and sets up all the Heathen Exercises and Religion, and forbids Gods Worship ; ravages and spoils and murders all refusers, till the *Maccabees* oppos'd his fury, and till *Judas* three years after, as I said, restor'd all, having fought against a violent Aggressor, not his rightful Prince ; and he is by *Grotius* made the very man, that typ'd out *Christ*, and was seen by the Prophet in *Isaiab 63.* Who is he that cometh from *Edom*, with dyed garments from *Bozra* ? to which he makes *Judas Maccabeus* answer, I that defend Gods Worship and the true Religion, against *Antiochus* and all his power, and to save my People cast my self upon extremest hazards.

Once more, when *Caius* Emperor of *Rome* had sent *Petronius* into *Syria*, charging him to make war on the Jews, and by all utmost force to make them condescend to let his image, the statue of himself I mean, be set up in their Temple at *Jerusalem* : the Jews when he came into *Syria* to their Country, met him several thousands, several times with supplications and entreaties to divert him, if they

f L. 1. de Jure
Bell. c. 4. §. 7.

‡ Concerning
the Rights of
the Church in a
Christian State
p. 306.

* 1 Macc. 1.
41, 51.

they could from doing it. But he declaring his Commission to them, let them see it was not possible for him to contradict the Emperor; and they declar'd also, since he durst not transgress the commands of the Emperor, he must not think it strange, if they durst not transgress Almighty Gods command, resolving to endure whatever should be inflicted on them, rather then violate that. Doing this often, and in multitudes, *Petronius* askt them whether they did mean on that account to fight with *Cæsar*, and make war against him; they repli'd they would not fight, but they could die on that account, and prostrating themselves and offering their naked throats, shew'd their readiness to entertain their death, and this for four daies together, and neglected all their husbandry, resolving not to till their land or to provide for life, when they had once determin'd thus to die. Upon this *Petronius* undertakes to write to *Cæsar*, and dissuade him from the enterprize; but *Caius* answers that his letter with another, which commands *Petronius*, for the punishment of his not executing his commands, to kill himself, resolving also to exterminate the Nation: but before his letter came to *Syria* to *Petronius*, the notice of the death of *Caius* came. Thus God did then preserve both him and them, tho at that time a Nation guilty of the death of Christ; yet in a cause, wherein they were resolv'd to suffer any thing rather then disobey Gods Law so grossly, he was pleas'd to spare them, and continue to preserve them.

As for the Christians, I might instance in the care God took soon after most expressely and miraculously to call them all out of *Jerusalem*, when the *Romans* were preparing to sit down before it, and destroy'd it utterly, and in all the persecutions, particularly that of *Diocletian*, when that ^u destruction that was level'd at, and falling on all Christianity, was in a trice return'd upon the Designers and on Heathenism. It might be a more parallel instance to the genius of these later ages, should I name that of the *Arrians*, men that were the ^x first that ever drew the sword of persecution against their fellow Christians; ^u *ἡ ἐκείνη* was their petition to ^y *Constantius*, a copy which the Church of *Rome* hath long writ after, with the blood of those that differ from them. And indeed the *Arrian* persecutions were most barbarous; yet when *Constantius* had don all he could, had made the Universe, saith *S^t Jerome*, all *Arrian*, by having banisht almost all the Catholic Bishops of the world, then very quickly God restores them, even by a *Julian* an Apostate: and then when shortly after *Valens* the same again, himself repenting of it, did revoke them, & lastly *Theodosius* restor'd them and establisht all. And tho afterwards God let the *Goths* continue both the heresy, and sometimes the persecution, for above two Ages in our western world; yet since that, for the last thousand years, the name of *Arrian* hath scarce bin heard. But I have said enough to shew, such is the ordinary method of Gods Providential workings, when *Sion* is in that condition: provided that the Church have not deprav'd it self as 'tis a Church, model'd it self by worldly principles and powers, and adopted rules or doctrines which are not consistent with those of Christ. There are few instances to be produc'd, I think, where any Church

^u *Nomine Christiano delecto, qui Remp. evertebant superstitione Christiana ubique deleta, & cultu deorum propagato.* *Grut. Inscip. p. 280.*
^x *Athan. Ep. ad Solit. pag. 815, 821, 854.*
^y See *Grotius De Jure Belli l. 2 c. 20. § 50.*

hath bin destroy'd, whose constitution hath preserv'd this temper, tho her wicked and ungracious members may be cut off: at last, as ² *St Peter tells, after it hath suffer'd a while, he will strengthen, stablish, settle it.* And if we look upon the low condition of our *Sion* together with these instances of Gods procedure, may we not take confidence to hope, that the appointed time is come? For is it not time for Thee to *arise*, O Lord, when thy resting place is destroying? And thou, O Christ, who art the Rock on which the Church is built, is it not time for thee to awake, to rise, rebuke the Tempests, break the waves that break into thy Church, and threaten as if they would swallow all that's built on Thee, the Rock of Ages? It is most certainly, provided we have those affections, which the text sets down here, as the diagnostics of that time; of which in the last place.

The first is this, *thy servants think upon her stones* with sorrow and sincere acknowledgment, that their demerits call'd this state upon her, and they therefore willingly receive, accept of Gods dealing with them, *for they take pleasure in it.* It is observ'd, that this was the expresse condition, upon which God covenanted to shew mercy on his People. *Levit. 26.* From *v. 14.* to the end we find, that if they should arrive at that height to abhor Gods Statutes, break all his Commandments, merit all his curses, and he should inflict them, and yet they go on still to walk contrary to him, and he overtake them still with plagues, yea and this thro all the stages both of sin and punishment, and each stage of punishment seven times multiplied *v. 18, 21, 24, 28.* so as to leave no more place for access, yet if then they confess their iniquity, and *their uncircumcized hearts be humbled, if then for they accept of willingly, contentedly receive the punishment of their iniquity v. 41. I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my Covenant with them, v. 44. but will remember my Covenant, and I will remember the Land, v. 42.* and remember *Sion* also, if we have the like sentiments for *Sion*; if her low condition, if her stones in the dust truly humble us into that dust, and make us from the heart acknowledg,

^a *Neh. 9. 33.* *Thou, O Lord, art just in all that is come upon, and hovers over us; for thou hast don right, but we have don very wickedly: for we have walkt unworthy of the opportunities thou hast afforded us, have bin unfruitful under the whole latitude of all thy working methods, the Kingdom of God hath had no Obedience, nothing but Rebellion from us, and 'tis just it should be taken from us, be given to a Nation bringing forth the fruits thereof, and have our candlestick remov'd, since we hate light, our deeds are so evil. 'Tis just that we, who heapt our selves Teachers according to our factions and lusts, should be given up to strong delusions, have a lying Spirit in the mouth of our Prophets, Prophets that should daub with untemper'd mortar, such as never will cement the stones of Sion, or build up a Church; that we, who have debauch't the Reformation, should quite loose it. The present time does certainly suggest the practice, which is set aside for great humiliation, and the occasion does require it; both the commands and the necessities too of the Church expect it; & God also calls for mourning, & for stricter applications to him on behalf*

behalf of *Sion*: and then they that do not answer all these calls by doing something more then ordinary do not think upon the stones of *Sion*, neither does it pity them to see her in the dust, 'tis certainly not time for God to arise in their behalf, they are sufficient to divert his preparations for her. No O Lord, *we will put our hands upon our mouths, and our mouths into the dust, and acknowledg righteousness belongeth unto thee, but to us confusion of face, as at this day;* and we resolve to humble our selves under thy correcting hand how sharp soever, and *take pleasure* in it too thus far, that dost shew by thy casting us thou hast not given us over as incorrigible, but hast taken us into thy care, and discipline, and managery; and on that account thy rod comforts us, our correction is joyous, *we take pleasure in the stones of Sion, and we favor, love her dust;* the other Symtom.

They prize her reliques, what is standing of her; and since 'tis on their account, namely thro their demerit, that she is so low and weak, they are more tender, love, and pity her more in that condition which they brought her into; will do what they can to raise her, *pulverem ejus evehere cupiunt* in the *Tigurine* Translation.

'Tis true indeed the stones of *Sion* in the dust are apt to become *stones of stumbling and rocks of offence*, as *S^t Peter* saith of the *chief corner stone of Sion*, *Christ* himself 1 *Pet.* 2. 8. whereat many stumble and fall. We had fatal experience how when once the building was disorder'd, the subordination broken, the Church offices and powers thrown down, on the one side *Sion* strait became like *Babel*, every one almost spoke a strange language, and so built by himself, built up, divided Faiths, and Churches, and Religions; on the other side that broken tottering State made many run away as from a falling Church, take shelter in another: and what the Cross of *Christ* was to the *Jews*, that the Cross of his Spouse too was to many pretended Christians, a ground to renounce her. They no sooner saw their Mother wounded, naked in the dust, but they concluded her fit to be buried, and ran from her as from the house of death; as if in the noblest way of sufferings to follow *Christ* could look like the mark of being Anti-Christian: and the yet unsettled state of it is made great use of for the same intents, her stones are laid on purpose to be stones of stumbling, and to give occasion of falling. And truly 'tis to be confest, that since the bonds of Government, which kept men under discipline, were unloos'd, and since the Churches Ministeries and her Powers are cut so short, that they are not so effectual to the ends of their institution to work out a strict Christian life, as were to be wisht; and since men are divided so by claims of several Churches, and by fearful expectations also, both the Conversations and the Faiths of men too are grown loose and dissolute: and 'twas not the least Stratagem of our Adversaries to contrive men should be such as could, while they continue such, find Sanctuary no where but in their Church, at their Altars; whether they have but to come to be absolv'd of all. But truly 'tis extreme barbarity in us, when 'tis on our account, by our demerits; for our punishment, that she is distressed, that fears and dangers press upon her, then to sleight her: if when we see our Mother gasping,

gasping, then to throw dirt at her, make her mouth be stopt with the reports of her ungodly offspring, the reproches of a pointing Scornor, that shall cry, see how her Sons behave themselves, how little love or pity they have for her. He favors her stones that beautifies and guilds them with inscriptions of Religious actions; this, if any thing, will raise them and repair her. And truly 'tis to be expected from the men that do pretend to have the pity and the sorrow that is due to their Mother, whom the powers of Hell seem arm'd against to ruin her, so far as she's disabled, should themselves supply to themselves what is wanting: if her discipline be loosen'd, and she have no strong ties on mens actions, we should do her work upon us, put obligations, fetters on our selves. 'Tis probable this very state of *Sion* in the text was that, which *Nehemiah* labour'd to repair, and see how he effected it c. 9. after a most solemn fasting and confession and bemoaning, rather of their guilts then sufferings, in the 10th himself, the Princes, and the Priests and Levites, and the rest of all the People with their Wives, their Sons and Daughters that were come to understanding, *entred into a curse and into an oath to walk in Gods Law, and to observe and do all the Commandments of the Lord our God, his Judgments and his Statutes, v. 29.* Here was a cement would compact the Stones of *Sion*, the whole building against all assaults whatever, seat her in her perfect height and beauty. It is not he loves her, who curses them that laid her in the dust, but he who enters such a curse of serving God; 'tis not he favors her dust, who wishes, talks, or swears on the Churches side, but he that humbles himself daily in the dust in her confessions and Prayers, he who binds himself with such an obligation to worship and serve God faithfully, as she prescribes: this will help to raise her, make her visible in the lives of her Children; and when the dust of *Sion* shall have a more perfect Resurrection in this world, and this of Christ shall as his other body rise out of the earth, it will be comfortable to each one that put his hands to the repairs, that did but fit one stone to it, that would not let God rest till he had establish'd our *Jerusalem* again a praise in the Earth. Then God almighty would be importun'd, prevail'd upon to put it in the hearts of those men, whose part 'tis to secure our *Sion* and repair her breaches, to build by a true line and level, make such an establishment as may be fitted not to the satisfying parties, factions, interests, or any human appetites, but the just obligations of Religion; not build weakly, fearing, as it were, the Churches strength should aw men in their practices, & that the weapons of her warfare should gall their vices, besides that their own strong holds may be still able to hold out, and not be beat down by her forces: for this were to model the structure of *Sion* to mens own, and to their sins convenience. But to build her up so, as that the profession and the practice of true Religion may be preserv'd safe, and Gods Worship kept intire; that upon our one onely foundation, the rock *Christ Jesus*, we may be built up with a *lively faith into an holy life*, all cemented by Charity, and all divisions be made up, and we may with one heart and one voice meet and join in giving Glory, Honor, &c.

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S E R M O N

V.

OF THE EXERCISE OF CONSCIENCE,

In the avoiding of Offence towards God and Men.

Acts 24. 16.

And herein do I exercise my self, to have alwaies a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.



Y text is the sum of a Christians practical duty; for as S^t Paul had in the verse before set down his faith and hope, here he sets down his workings. In the words we have

1. The state of that duty exprest ἀποσκευασμένης, *a conscience void of offence.*

2. That is brancht out into its several respects, πρὸς τὸ θεὸν *towards God*, καὶ τὸς ἀνθρώπους *and towards*

man; and those either

1. As the objects of that which a good conscience endeavors and means, an unblameable conversation in those duties that look towards God, those of Devotion, Piety and Godliness; or of those duties that look towards man, those of Justice and Honesty, particularly so call'd. Or

2. God and Man here may be look'd upon as having both to do in being the rule of Conscience, God's law, and man's also, that is, the just laws of lawful Superiors, both obliging it: and a *conscience void of offence towards God and towards man* is such an one as does not onely not offend God nor man, in that which God commands to be don to himself and to the neighbor, but such also as doth not offend in what man, the lawful Governor, commands: for to these we must needs be subject, *not only for wrath, but conscience sake.*

3. Here are the seasons which this Conscience do's respect, and they are all seasons ἀεὶ πάντως *alwaies.*

4. The interest S^t Paul does seek after in this condition ἐν τούτῳ ἀσκῶ *in this I exercise my self*; as on one side it is not fancying or opining, often hearing, no nor talking of conscience, but exercise and doing; for the Christians life is ἀσκησις, *a constant exercise*, and that is at once his duty and profession here: so on the other side, it is not perfect possession of this state; there is no such thing as perfection in this life, but laboring towards it. In handling which parts I shall thus proceed.

1. Having in a word explain'd ἀποσκευαστὸν συνείδησιν, I shall enquire what are those offences that must be remov'd in order to that state that's here describ'd; and having clear'd the conscience of those,

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2^{dly} view

2^{dly} view the latitude and extent of its obligation, see how it respects both God and man, both as the rules and objects of its acts, and as we go along, we shall direct the practice of that duty which S^t Paul did labor in, how we must exercise our selves that we may be in such a state, which is the 3^d thing and the application of all.

Συνείδησις ἀποβλεποῦσα may be understood from the use of that word as 'tis taken either passively *Phil. 1. 10. that ye may be ἀποβλεποῖ with-out offence*, not led into evil by mistakes of what is good, or any other color whatsoever; or else as 'tis taken actively *1 Cor. 10. 32. ἀποβλεποῖς ἵνα μὴ δώῃς ὀφθαλμὸν ὅτι ὀφθαλμὸν ὁποῖα* give no offence to any man; which as the context proves is but the same, and means, let nothing that you do be such as may induce another man to sin; lay not *πεσσοῦμματα* rocks of offence or stumbling blocks in any Christians course: and therefore in my text *συνείδησις ἀποβλεποῦσα* is such a conscience, as does not induce the man himself to any sin against God or man, and a life that is not led into it; a conversation that is according to such a conscience, is that which S^t Paul aims to have, and which that we may have, all such *πεσσοῦμματα* we must endeavor to remove, which what they are, I told you, was to be my first inquiry.

And the first is error of judgment, which makes an erring conscience; such a one as gives false information of duty, which either tells me that I may or must do that which God's law or some other law in force upon me saies I must not do, or else tells me I must not do that which I may, or am perhaps bound to do. A rock of offence this, upon which many men do split, and make ship-wreck of a good conscience; and which is worse error of judgment, call'd by some new light, is such a light indeed, so plac'd between the rocks as must needs guide the Mariner upon them, make it necessary for him to be wreckt; for in this case sin lies on the right and the left hand, which way soever he does turn, he falls upon it. For first if this man act against his erring conscience, he sins, altho the Law of God do not make the act sin *Rom. 14. 14. to him that esteemeth any thing unclean, to him it is unclean*; altho S^t Paul saies there, he knew it was not in it self unclean, yet so it was to him, and that to such an height, that the man whose example wrought with any one to eat against the perswasion of his mind *destroiet him v. 15*. 'Tis therefore a destroying sin to do a thing against the expresse judgment of the mind. And all the reason in the world; for since good or evil do not, nor can move the will as they are in themselves such, but as apprehended, and according to the notion we have of them in the mind: 'tis certain therefore every motion of the will to good or evil, consequently every good or evil action must be formally accounted such from good or evil things not in themselves, but in the apprehension of the mind; that is, according as our consciences dictate to us they are good or evil. And indeed no law of God or man, no rule of duty can be appli'd to us but by the mediation of conscience; for till that tell me such a thing's commanded and my duty, it is to me as if there were no such command and it were not my duty, for till then I am not conscious it is, know nothing of it. This alone therefore does propose and apply duty to us; and consequently whether that which it proposeth be my real duty in it self or no, yet

yet I must needs look on it as so, as having no direction in the world besides what to do or forbear, but what my conscience some way instructed tells me, God or my Governors require: while therefore that does absolutely tell me such a thing is unlawful, whether it be so or no, while that persuasion lasts, the soul yet judges it unlawful, and consequently if the heart embrace it, then it does deliberately embrace unlawfulness, which tho it be not in the thing, is yet in the choice. I like and follow that which in my judgment is vicious, and be it in it self what it will, 'tis so to me; 'tis evident the inclinations and actions pursue vice, when they pursue that which they cannot look upon but as vice. And therefore *S^t Paul* saith ^a *what-* *soever is not of faith, whatsoever is contrary to the persuasion or judgment of lawfulness, i. e. in other words, what is against conscience is sin.* Conscience therefore is the rule from which it is sin to recede. *Rom. 14. 23.*

But you will tell me, where the conscience errs, the rule is false and crooked, and so must not be follow'd; but the rule of this rule, God's Law, and not the conscience, must be obey'd. Good counsel if it could be follow'd; for certainly if the man know what God's Law does require of him, in that case his conscience does not err; if he do not know what God's Word requires, how then can he follow it against that which his conscience tells him God requires? and it is sure if the man should suspend his action, or have reason not to act according to his erring conscience, he never can have reason to act according to a conscience well inform'd: for it is plain his conscience does as much propose the error as his duty, as it does the truth; the man as really believes the one is to be don as the other, and hath no reason to make difference, and therefore if at any time he must follow his conscience, he always must, and t'will be sin to act against it, be it what it will.

But then you'll hope it will excuse to act according to it. No alas, this is but the other rock, it is sin too to act according to it. The proofs are very pregnant *Gen. 12. 17. Because of Sara Abraham's wife the Lord plagu'd Pharaoh with great plagues and all his house,* namely those that had commended her before him *v. 15.* and so had contributed to the offence. On the same account he plagu'd *Abimelech Gen. 20. 17.* altho in the *6 v.* God saith, *he knew Abimelech did it in the integrity of his heart,* and tho *Abimelech* did plead the same to God, he did it innocently *v. 5.* yet in the *9. v.* he expostulates with *Abraham,* *what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my Kingdom a great sin.* Again *S^t Paul* affirms of his own nation *Rom. 10. 2.* that it was out of zeal to God and his Law they persevered in infidelity and opposition to Christ's doctrine, yet for that very opposition he affirms, that they were *hardned* and design'd to everlasting perdition. And Christ saith of the same Jews *John 16. 2.* that *the time would come, when they that kill'd his Apostles and Ministers should think they did God service,* *λατρείαν προσφέρειν* *think they offer'd an oblation.* The error was so strong, it made the sin look like Religion and Attonement, yet that zeal and conscience was plagu'd with *wrath that came upon them to the uttermost,* even to an utter extirpation: or to restrain our selves to our Apostle, he saith of himself *v. 1.* of the foregoing chapter, *I have liv'd in all good conscience*

conscience before God until this day, and therefore when against Christ's reformation he defended the *Mosaic Law*, and persecuted the opposers of it, he did all out of a good mind, according to the dictates of his conscience, sincerely what he was perswaded that he ought to do; and now if conscience could excuse, here was enough of that, a good Conscience, and could his fiery persecutions by vertue of that conscience be christian'd holy Zeal? could his pure heart make his bloody hands undefil'd? Oh no! 'twas
 a 1 Tim. 1. 13. ^a *blasphemy, and persecution, and injury*, for all 'twas conscience. If this seem strange, that acting thus according to the conscience should make men such sinners, since all facts are estimated chiefly by the heart that they proceed from, by the good or bad mind they are done with, that is, by the conscience of the doer; we must know, that where the error is not the effect of any carnal prepossession or principle, but truly error, there the sinfulness in this case lies not altogether formally in acting so according to their conscience, unless first the conscience take up perswasions & give sentence without a sufficient inquisition, when there is the least appearance of a danger that 'tis plain such a perswasion may engage us in a state of sin, we must examine strictly, and this seems the case of *Pharaoh* and *Abimelech*; they were glad to think *Sarah* was *Abrahams* sister, therefore made no close inquiry, were content with his once saying so, and on that account, altho the one and afterwards the other took her in the innocency of their heart, the text saith, they committed a great sin, for which God did plague them. Especially ² if men have bin call'd on to consider, had the opportunity of means of conviction, such as God will judg sufficient in their circumstances, then retaining those perswasions, following such an error gives it that which is equivalent to wilfulness, makes the guilt. This was the *Jews* case and *S^t Pauls*, tho *Moses* Law were given by God himself, confirm'd by wonders, and by such a constant series of Gods most immediate dispensations, as might give them just cause to believe it was their certain duty to adhere to it, yet when God judg'd Christs works together with the Prophecies that went of him, had given a sufficient testimony to his Reformation, the *Jews* resisting that, tho out of zeal to God, and in obedience to his Law and to their Guides the Priests and Sanhedrim, were harden'd to excision for it; or if, as 'tis most certain, they were leaven'd into averfaction to Christs doctrine by their expectation of a pompous *Messiah*, his Religion did not serve their sensual ends, 'tis to be fear'd the same do's influence the more sincere and erring party of the Church of *Rome*; yet *S^t Paul* also, tho out of a good conscience doing so, esteem'd himself the ^b *chief of sinners* for so doing. 'Tis the too hasty taking up, or the too obstinate retaining this erroneous conscience, makes the sin it does ingage into be so exceeding sinful; therefore certainly whoever lets their conscience be surpriz'd by prejudice, or warmth of mind, much more ambition, pride, revenge, or incidental discontents and disobligation, reputation of a party, interest, design, if these or any sensuality tho but lurking indiscernably (^c *for the heart is deceitful above all things, who can know it?*) have given any tincture to the heart and pufft a passion into conscience, or if in the
 uprightness

b 1 Tim. 1. 15.

c Jer. 17. 9.

uprightness of their heart they took up their persuasions, yet if they retain them in the least on any such account, or else however if they do not hearken to, examin any calls or means; which God does either by his Providence or Ministers offer the opportunities of, for their conviction, specially if by seeing good and wise men do judg otherwise, they have any cause to doubt, and yet persist still, and retain the error, it is this that spoils the Conscience, so that while it errs it does ensnare the man, entangles him in a necessity of sinning, leads him into such labyrinths of guilt that whatsoever he does, he offends: if he do what his erring conscience dictates to him, then he sins against God's Law, if he forbear, he sins then against God's Vicegerent, his own Conscience; there is the guilt of his deed, here the guilt of his heart, which does oblige a man to follow that which it is sin to follow, and which makes him, he must and ought to do that which he must not, ought not to do.

And then the onely application to such a Conscience is to advise the laying it aside, to rectify the error; good counsel this indeed, but hardest to be taken in the world. For that a man may set himself to rectify, he must know himself in an error, and if he know that, he hath not an erring Conscience; this when it is such strongly, the man does not so much as doubt of his opinion, and while he does not doubt, what temptation can he have to think of rectifying? especially if men are perswaded that their Conscience is directed by such Guides as cannot err. We cannot but remember how the violation of all Laws and of all rights sacred and secular, sedition and rebellion, and such other dreadful consequents as we must not remember, being dictated by conscience, undertaken on account of Religion were esteem'd the characteristics of a godly side; nor are we suffer'd to forget, how the same things undertaken on account of holy Church make Saints and Martyrs: for let not men pretend these are not Doctrines or directions of the Church of *Rome*. There is no one of the rebellious parties, but it may with much more truth and modesty affirm they are not theirs, since they have not declar'd them so authentically; and if we are not sure these are their doctrines, 'tis impossible to know that they have any, for none of their doctrines have a greater attestation. If some few declaring their opinion to the contrary, shall against the declarations of the Tenets of their Scholes, and the directions of much greater numbers, their Casuists, the rules and practice of their whole law, the determinations of particular and general Councils, make them not to be their doctrine, then no Church hath any doctrines. Now, if as one side of these pretend some to a Divine Light within themselves, some to the Divine Spirit speaking in the Scriptures for their Guide, so the other plead the public Spirit of the Church speaking at least in the Assemblies of their general Council most infallibly, and consequently all of them must judg it is impossible their Guide can err; how is it possible to prescribe means to rectify the errors of such Consciences?

But should I pass these guilts of the first magnitude, to which 'tis wonderful a Conscience can be debauched, and err into them, should I mention one that's common to all of them, violating the Laws,
disturbing

disturbing the Peace of the Government, unHINGING the constitution of it by illegal meetings to disseminate their principles, and make more errors, and more separation, wider breaches. I shall not tell these, that the Church no where gives a privilege to any to assemble not for Gods own worship, from whose principles or practices the State hath reason to expect commotions or sedition, the diminishing their secular Powers, or endangering their persons, and on that account forbids them. Sure I am, there is no one word in the Gospel for it, and I leave all the mentioned parties, Popish or the other, to consider whether they have bin so innocent as not to be suspected justly? and would only ask each party of them, whether it alone have right to act according to its conscience thus and otherwise against the Laws, so that all others, what sincerity so'ere they act with, have no privilege? or whether it be the Christians birth-right, and due to all others? If any party say, that it alone hath right, besides that all the rest will never grant this, nor have reason for it, and so all must quarrel; yet if they do say so, sure there's nothing else but truth or confidence of having it, can make them judg so: but since every the most erring conscience does and must beleive the truth is with him, he hath the same reason, so contentions must be endless, & this state of conscience is just the Leviathans state of war; besides that this pretence of any single party for it self makes war with the hypothesis it self of liberty of conscience. But if they grant all other Sects to have just right to act according to their conscience, then those that really believe the doctrine of their Church is true, their ways blameless, and the statutes which restrain the liberties of the Recusants and the Dissenters are all just, those of them also that have sworn obedience to these statutes, and those Magistrates and Governors too that are bound by oath to the execution of them, and to take care of the peace of their Subjects, and hold that, as 'tis, a duty and an obligation in conscience on them: these, I say, have just right too to act according to their conscience also, and by consequence to execute the Laws upon those others; and then, I am sure in conscience, and according to the very rules of all these men of liberty, those have a right to take away their wild and dangerous liberties, and by the very Principles of all these Dissenters are as much bound in conscience to restrain them, as they think themselves bound to use those liberties according to their conscience. Yea these are bound in conscience to suffer all their Governors to put restraints upon them; because to do so is for them to act according to their conscience, or if they think (as 'tis not strange if they think contradictions) that they have a right in conscience to contend for this with Governors, who yet they acknowledg to have a right too to restrain their liberties, (since all, as themselves have granted, have the same right,) there must needs be endless quarrels and contentions both with Governors and with themselves, and just of all sides, in which each hath right, which is another contradiction also; and so still this state of conscience will be the Leviathans state of war, and must dissolve all Government, as being inconsistent with it. Whether any consequents in prospect or design can make this state of things allow d

allow'd and eligible, or how far Governments can properly secure themselves, if it be allow'd, which yet 'tis certain that they have a right to do against the clamorous pretences of all conscience whatsoever as to Church Laws: yet how far they can, I say, secure themselves against such sorts of men of one side, who declare that their Government it self is sinful; or on t'other side a sort of men, who not onely here in this Nation, after the most dire and hateful treason ever hatch'd or thought of, were not, nor are suffer'd by the Guides of their conscience, by their Pastors neither their Supreme one nor their particular Confessors, to give assurance of their civil obedience and allegiance to their own Prince. But in *France*, after the murder of two Kings by them, both of their Religion, when as *Lewis* the 13th did design, and ask the advice of his Parliament, to make provision for his own safety and assurance of the Loyalty of his Subjects by an Oath (a thing by Gods own People, since 'twas a Kingdom, practic'd) all the Clergy, those Directors of the consciences of that Nation, were so far from suffering it, that they made the King to cause the Parliament to raze out what of it was drawn and registred in their Journals, professing to his face that they would excommunicate all as Heretics that were against that Proposition, that the Pope could depose Kings. But 'tis not this, but how to secure Governments against it, to rectify the erring conscience I would speak to; and if the sense of any sacred obligations, if the calamities of Church or State, that cry aloud bemoaning the effects of conscience thus let loose, call upon him to consider, and at least suggest the duty of examining his conscience, then the ^{DISSENT} here of the text, the exercises that are like to have an influence upon him, besides humble praier to Almighty God for a right judgment in all things, together with a hearty resolution not to suffer any principle or interest so to engage him to a practice or opinion, but that, if God will please to shew him light, he will follow it strait, and utterly forsake those paths, to which he was misguided by the error of his mind, and so begins to act accordingly as well as he can. Now such a resolution hath a promise, ^d *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or not.* Besides this, I say, let him thus exercise himself, when any thing offers it self to practice, and gets this holy advocate of its side, brings conscience to plead, then I will search and examine strictly that same action, first undress it quite, see what it is naked by it self, and then ask not what fine motives, what good end it hath, but where the rule is for it. If it be in things merely Spiritual, then what Law of God; but if in other things, what Law of man, what just subordination to Gods will is there for this action? For laws, not zeal do make the rules for Conscience: for Conscience being nothing but a full perswasion, judgment, dictate that a thing is either duty under obligation, is according to a Law that does command it, or else is unlawful, is against a Law. If Conscience shall tell me such a thing I am bound to do, but I have no Law of God or man for it; or else such a thing I must forbear, it is a sin, absolutely unlawful, but truly I can bring

bring no Law in force against it, sure I shall easily reject the clamors of this Conscience, for it talks contradictions: for nothing can be unlawful, but what is against a Law. If, tho there be not express Law to forbid or command, yet I see grounds that stagger me, and several hard things which incline to my opinion, this does not make the erring Conscience: for that is dogmatical and positive, and must have law, doctrines and grounds of probability; those onely make a doubt, the next offence I mean to name.

An offence this, that whosoever stumbles at, does fall into the lowest pit, for *he that doubteth, is damn'd if he eat* Rom. 14. 23. Now the state of a doubting conscience is this, either the man in himself really believes the thing he does consult of is forbidden, but yet seeing the example of some man he hath esteem for, or else hearing some good probable grounds to the contrary, does entertain some doubt whether it be so bad, and upon that without being resolv'd, yea thinking still it is a sin, yet ventures on it: in this case tho the man may have some hopes it may not be a sin, yet judging in himself it is, and choosing notwithstanding, it is plain he does not onely venture at, but chooseth sin, and therefore sins. This was the very case of the weak Christians in relation to eating things offer'd to Idols, which *S^t Paul* there speaks of. Or secondly, if he do not absolutely in himself judg it a sin, yet really do's doubt it is, and without endeavoring to be truly satisfi'd by all appointed fit means, does it howsoever; this man does as much as resolve I know not what it is I am about to do, I doubt 'tis sin, but I resolve to do it, tho it be so. Now this is a wicked resolution, and the consequent action must be so too: it is as much as saying, I resolve to venture Gods displeasure, rather then loose the satisfaction of that action; now whatsoever otherwise the action be, yet such a resolution stains it with a vicious tincture, by infusion of that wicked purpose.

To bring this to our own concerns, if my lawful Superior command a thing by an establish'd law, which yet either by some obscure place of Scripture, or by the silence of Scripture, or some inference of my own from others having put that action to an evil use, or the infusion of some Teacher of whose holiness I have an opinion, I doubt whether I may do it or no, and cannot satisfy my self, in this case, if the man that doubts comply, without acquiring any satisfaction, do it merely too because he will not be obnoxious to the penalty of law, 'tis clear he does it with a doubting conscience, and so sins; but if he thus discourse, (which is the proper *modus* for such a conscience to remove this offence) I am sure God hath commanded me to obey the lawful commands of my lawful Superiors, now am I sure this is not lawful? No, that I am not, for I onely doubt; why then I must needs also doubt it may be lawful, therefore I must needs doubt God hath commanded me to obey them in this, and then if I refuse I must needs do that with a doubting conscience; for if the thing be lawful, I am sure I sin in not obeying, and I doubt it may be so, and so not doing will have the same guilt, which by not doing I endeavor to avoid.

Now if whatever the action be, as long as I know not certainly whether

whether it be lawful or unlawful in it self, I shall have equal guilt in the refusal (altho there be no scandal or content) as I can fancy to my self in doing; and if I cannot satisfy my doubt my self, since I have then no other way to seek for resolution; but from those whom God hath set over me, shall not the reasons and commands of my Superiors, the example of all those that are obedient, weigh as much with me as the opinion of some whom I think holy, or some little color which can onely make me doubt? If I be not sure it is unlawful, and am perfectly assur'd of my duty to my Superiors, this certainly ought to suspend my other doubt, and in so doing I am sure, I take far the more probable and safer course; and he that does so, cannot have the guilt of a doubting conscience, for the resolution of that was clean another thing: I doubt there may be sin in it, however I will do it, whereas this man that he may take the safest course to avoid sin, resolveth thus, merely for fear there may be guilt in my refusal, I do that which otherwise truly I would not do.

I cannot pass by this reflection here, how there will come a time, when it shall be more tolerable for the erring or the doubting conscience, notwithstanding their sad consequences, than for those that *hold the truth in unrighteousness*: the one sort of these have some checks at sin, they doubt and they demur; the other sort sin merely because they would please God, and offend out of zeal; but the other sin because they will sin. If actions lawful otherwise will make up an indictment to our condemnation, don but with a doubting mind, what guilt and what damnation is there in those that are undertaken against known command and present full conviction? that muster up and recollect all the fore-mentioned guilts, which when they were divided, did make actions so ruining; at once they defy God and their own heart: if *he that doubts is damn'd if he eat*, tho what he eat were lawful to him, what will become of him that eats to surfeiting, and knows that such things call for condemnation? with what face can he blast a deceiv'd honest Heathen with his Gods, who in the face of God, and of all Laws, in view of a believ'd hell, and in despite of heaven and of his own conscience that suggests all these to him, yet by frequent intemperances makes his belly his god, and by uncleanness that new testament idolatry, sets up as many idols, as his foul hearts find objects, and by dishonesty and frauds serves covetousness, which is idolatry? They, who defy their conscience thus, are in the ready way to a reprobate sense, the last offence that I will name.

When the heart gives a false judgment of things, *calls evil good, calls good evil* in the Prophets words, 'tis not uneasy to deduce how arrive at this. There is no pains bestow'd upon the education of their childhood, they are made indeed to renounce the Devil, the evil Spirit is exorcis'd out of that hold he had of them on the account of being born children of wrath; but no provision for the Holy Spirit taken care of, rather all that's possible is don to grieve him thence, and so the evil one *returns, finds the house empty, and takes to him seven spirits worse than himself, and they dwell there*; or

Matth. 12.
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to speak out of parable, there are no principles of virtue planted in them, no labor us'd to make impressions of Religion and the fear of God, the sense of duty, averſation to all vice, but as far as conversation, with example of all lewdneſs, can have influence, they are bred and fitted for the Tempter, and when they and temptations are grown up, it is no wonder if they taſt, then ſwallow down the bait, and ſo are taken: then they get to themſelves principles, that may ſtop the mouth of natural conſcience; either Religion do's not mean ſo ſtrictly, or againſt the ſtrictneſs they oppoſe the cuſtome of the age, or honor, or the like, and theſe together with the converſations of ſin do clean take off the averſation, and ſo by degrees the ſenſe, the mind firſt leaves to be afraid and ſtartle at it, and then leaves to check at it, and having don this long, the cuſtome ſtupifies the conſcience, and makes the ſins ſeem neceſſary to them, and they cannot be without them, and the abſolute neceſſity makes them conceit them little ſins, and in a while no ſins at all: ſtick not to ſay, thoſe terrors Clergy-men do talk of, are but Mormo's, but religious ſpectres. We have this daily experience, that looſneſs in practice quickly grows into irreligion in heart, that they who with all might and main do long reſiſt the power of Godlineſs, do at laſt proceed to caſt off even the very form, and they who would not receive the love of the truth, but did prefer the ſatisfaction of their humors, prejudices, paſſions, luſts before the doctrine of piety and virtue, tho it came with the greateſt evidence of reaſonableneſs; that ſuch, I ſay, are given over to *ſtrong deluſions to believe lies*, even lies of ſo eternal unhappy a conſequence as this, that virtue and religion are but emty names, that conſcience is but prejudice: ſuch are thoſe S^t Paul deſcribes 1 Tim. 4. 2. *καταμετρίσθους καὶ συνείσθους*, *men of branded conſciences*. Now we uſe to account that perſon infamous that's branded onely in his hand or forehead, but theſe are men of ſigmatiz'd hearts, there is a brand upon their ſoul and conſcience; and you will find ſome other characters upon them there, they *depart from the faith*, they *give heed to ſeducin^g Spirits*, lay out for a Religion that will give them hopes of ſafety tho they ſin on, and to *doctrines of Devils*; fit Scholars for ſuch Tutors, ſeeds of a bleſſed education they have, that have ſuch Inſtructors, and ſuch they have whoſe conſciences are branded: and the whole progreſs of their wickedneſs you will find Rom. 1. from v. 18. *because they hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs*, join'd impious lives with the profeſſion of the true Religion, were vicious in deſpite of their own underſtandings, which told them, they ſhould not be ſo; upon which great proficiency in guilt v. 24. God withdrew his grace, left them to the purſuit of all their foul deſires, permitted them to break out into all reproachfull villanies, ſins that were violences, contumelies to their nature; yea v. 28. *because they acted perfectly againſt all notions they had of God*, he gave them up to that abominable ſtate of mind, to have no ſenſe of guilt, to have a judgment ſo perverted, as not to think things of the moſt forbidden and moſt deteſtable nature to be foul, and then ſee what a ſhole of conſequents break in: from v. 29. *ſeind vices*, things that do not onely merit hell, but poſſeſs, enjoy, and make the place. Theſe are

are the entertainments of those Regions, but none more essential than those v. 32. they *not onely commit those things, but have pleasure in those that do them*, do not onely favor themselves in the transgressions, (for to that men may have some temptation from the flesh) but to evince their understandings are debauch'd, their consciences corrupted, and that they are of a reprobate mind, they take pleasure in others committing them, from which they have no pleasure, can enjoy nothing but the villany of being glad that others are debauch'd and vitiated, this recommends men to them. And truly now I have no words for them, they do outgo expression; I may apply that which the *Psalmist* saith of the fool, *in his heart there is no God.* Psalm 14. 1. I am sure there is none in theirs, that will not let his Deputy be there, not suffer conscience his Vicegerent to be within them; and it were well, if they could exclude it for ever. But alas! when their sins and pleasures shall begin to die, then conscience will revive, and be their *worm that never dies*; however they have stupifi'd it here, then it will gnaw eternally, then oh that they could have no conscience, no sting, no lash: but it will be an immortal feind to them, and that which they so much trample on now, will then be their great hell.

And now I can prescribe no exercise will remove this offence, when the conscience is past feeling, then it is past cure. The onely method is prevention here, the onely *ἀσκησις* to keep the conscience tender; then it will be sensible of every the least touch of guilt, check at whatever we shall do amiss. Conscience is the eie of the soul, now tenderness is a disposition very proper to the eie, it is the tenderest part of the whole body; and if the conscience be right, that is so of the soul: the smallest spill or mote is restless agony to the eie, it never leaves to force out tears, both to bewaile the torment, and to wash away the cause. I am sure our Savior calls a sin of the least size or guilt *χρόνος ἐν ὀφθαλμῷ*, *Matth. 7. 3.* things that should make the conscience as restless, fret into lamentings, prick passages for repenting sorrow. The conscience of Converts always does so, *Acts 2. 37.* *When they heard this, they were pricked in heart*; and indeed this is the necessary constitution of Soul for them that ever hope to have their conversation holy: he whose eie is not tender, 'tis not useful; if it be not sensible of spills that get into it, it cannot be sensible of objects; such a callum as will make it not feel, will make it not see; and when it cannot perceive pain, then it cannot direct or light: and so the conscience, if it feel no grievance from thy vices, it will never boggle at them; but when it is tender as the eie, then it will rowl and weep, if any thing disturb it, 'twill be restless till it free it self. Let other Souls be tickled, when they feel the pleasures of a sin; but, Lord, let my heart smite me, then the stroke and smart may make me fly the cause. Let sin, that and cruel Serpent, sting, stab, wound me thus; for then it will make outlets for its putrification, it will draw tears to cleanse me from it self: and sure after the blood of Christ, there is no other laver to wash away the foulness of my sin, but that which gushes from those wounds of spirit, nothing else will quench the power of it. This tender conscience will preserve the whole con-

versation pure, if its respects be universal, if its cares reach to the whole latitude of its object, if it be *void of offence both towards God, and towards man*, which shews the extent of its obligation, and is my next consideration, of which in a few words.

Void of offence towards God and towards men, a conversation unblamable in all things that relate to God or man, both these must be join'd: the Honesty without the Godliness is but Heathen Morality, and the Godliness without honesty but Pharisaical Hypocrisy. 'Tis just that which our Savior describes and sentences *Matt. 23. 14. Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation:* as if their long and earnest prayers pull'd down nothing else but woes and condemnation on them, and their more religion gain'd them but more hell. The one of these for all his honesty, if he have not piety, he is without God in this world, nor shall have any thing of his heaven in the other, whose life did not look thitherwards, but aim'd no further than a conversation that was regular betwixt man and man. The other, the dishonest man, notwithstanding his Godliness, shall be without God in the world to come; for sure he is not fit to live with God in that, who is not fit to live with man in this: who will not behave himself honestly, must not think he can live religiously; nor can that help him towards Gods rewards, that does but help him to the greater condemnation. So that they must be join'd, and our conscience must be *void of offence towards God and towards men*; and that not onely as the objects of our duty, but the rules.

That Gods Law is the rule of conscience, that we are bound to do what he commands, I think I need not prove; in this I have onely to wish, our practice were as orthodox as our opinions. But that man can oblige the conscience, that laws however just of our rightful Governors are a part of this rule, and we are bound in conscience to observe what they would have us do, many men doubt; there *bene qui latuit, bene vixit*, a close offender does not sin, and if they come not under the lash of the Law, they think the conscience hath no whip for these offences; yet Scripture is express *Rom. 13. 5. Wherefore you must needs be subject, not onely for wrath, but also for conscience sake.* again *1 Pet. 2. 13, 15. submit your selves to every ordinance of man for the Lords sake, for so is the will of God.* I do not here set down that humane Laws oblige the conscience immediatly, it is enough for me they do it by Gods constitution, that what we do so is for his sake, and 'tis his will that we should do it; and then he that does not obey, he breaks the will of God, and so does that which a good conscience must needs tell a man he must not do. I know some have found out a subterfuge, that onely passive obedience is required in conscience, not active; and tho this interpretation would secure the Magistrate, for men must not rebel against that rod, which they are bound to submit to: yet

1. 'Tis strange a man should not be bound in conscience to obey the Law, yet should be bound in conscience to suffer for the not obeying it. What reason for this difference? Sure if either, 'tis most reasonable to escape the punishment, if he can. But

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2. What sense will they make *S^t Paul* speak, * *wherefore ye must needs be subject, not onely for wrath*; if *wrath* mean punishment, as it certainly does, and *be subject* signify submit, not actively, but submit to punishment, as they will have it, then it means, therefore a man must submit to punishment not onely for punishment, or for fear of being punished, but also because he is bound in conscience to bear the punishment: now 'tis indeed impossible that a man ought and is necessitated to submit to the penalty of the Law for fear of the penalty of the Law, be bound to suffer a thing for fear of suffering that very thing, or that he may escape that very suffering, which he is bound in conscience too to suffer. These are contradictions. But of the active obedience the sense is plain: we must obey their just Laws, not onely that we may avoid their punishments which we shall suffer if we obey not, but because we are bound in conscience to obey. All the Apostles instances also being of active obedience, and the whole reasoning of the place evincing it, might serve for further evidence, but this shall suffice me for proof; and *S^t Paul* truly seems to take in these here in the text, for amongst several things laid to his charge, some against God himself, as *prophanation of his temple* v. 6. he was accus'd of being also *pestilent, a mover of sedition* v. 5. to all which he answers in my text, that he was so far from prophanes in Religion and his duty towards God, and from sedition in the State, that he did exercise himself in this alone, in laboring to *have a conscience void of offence* in all things, by God or his Governors commanded.

And this president of our Apostle, every one that hears me knows, the true sons of this Church always follow'd, both in doctrine and in practice, even to the Martyrdom not onely of their persons, families, but of the Church it self. Not like those holy Church-men who account themselves exempt, no subjects to the secular powers; nor those others, who withdrawing their obedience in all things which they do not like, do seem to own no powers but themselves, are Subject onely to their own minds.

Now he that does thus exercise himself *always*, (which is the onely thing that I have left to speak to,) is in that state of Christian perfection, which the Travellers to Heaven, while they are upon the way, can arrive at: for that must needs be a good life, which is regulated by a good conscience; for if a conscience do its part, do neither err nor doubt, but is tender in all, in a word, if it inform truly in all duty, and thou doest accordingly, thou doest all thy duty: therefore all good life is call'd by the name of a *good conscience* 1 *Tim.* 1. 19 and plainer *Hebr.* 13. 18. *We trust we have a good conscience, willing in all things to live honestly*, sincere endeavors to obey in every thing, a conscience that is right in every thing, not boggling with it, accepting the persons of duty, (being very consciencious in some things, but taking liberty in others,) and being so *always*, not by fits, having onely Paroxysmes of Religion, now and then very consciencious, otherwise loose enough, but to be so in all respect, and at all times: this was the sum of all *S^t Pauls* endeavor, he had no stricter aims, this was the height of his Religion, this his *exercise*.

Yet why should I call it his exercise, when it is his enjoyment? 'tis his ante past of heaven it self. The applauds of an honest undeceiving heart that is conscious to it self of this in earnest, they shed comforts into every state of life, beyond all that the earth can give, they shed the *peace of God that passeth understanding*. If my conscience be clear, let my condition be never so overcast, I live in shine; let them be troubled with afflictions, or with sad expectations, who understand no delights but carnalities, whose souls are married to some little comforts of this world, adversity indeed sweeps all their joys away at once; but he that understands the comforts of a good conscience, and knows where to find them, and who hath a treasure of them in his breast, will soon be able to allay the other sadneses. What can I want, if I have a continual feast, and such is a good conscience: let all the world look black upon me as long as I have light within me, and in that light can see a pleasantness upon Gods face. Yea it is this indeed must make prosperity contentful, when to the candle of the Lord, the light of his countenance also does add its shine; when I have no ill remembrances, either as to the possession or to the enjoyment; when my heart assures me I did neither get it ill, nor use it ill, 'twas truly Gods gift to me, and I strive to make it an instrument of my service to him. This is transfigur'd prosperity, but without this, for all the hurry of mens pleasures, something will now and then rejolt worse than surfets, and come up bitterer than the gall of ejected riots, and they shall find their great provisions are but variety of nauseousness, onely plentiful vexation, and a jolly restlessness, while they are here; and then when they but think of going hence,

^b *O death! how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man, that lives at rest in his possessions, to the man that hath nothing to molest him, hath hath prosperity in all things; and if he have the sting of conscience to imbitter it, which will be sure to stir at such a time, alas! how unconceivable a sadness must then dwell upon that soul, that can think nothing kinder to it self than hell.* But he that can at such a time say with ⁱ *Hezekiah, Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walk'd before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have don that which is good in thy sight, then if God do not send a message of fifteen years, yet he will add to him an everlastingness of years of joy; if his days do no return, nor the Sun mount back again to give him a more full noon light, he shall be taken to the fountain of eternal light.* Oh let me have that light, that will enlighten the sad approaches of the dark grave; that, when I am going to make my house in a black lonely desolate hole of earth, will be like the day spring of immortality, like the dawn of heaven, and such glimpses will break in thro a clear conscience. 'Twas that which made the Martyrs run to the fires of execution as to fires triumph, and they look'd upon their flames as on *Elijah's* chariot's flames, that flew upwards, not with hast to their own Sphere, but the Sphere of Martyr's Heaven, and whose brightness did prelude and expire into Glory.

^b Ecclesiasticus 41. 1.

ⁱ Ezechiah 38. 3.

S E R M O N

VI.

Of the Blessedness of Mourners.

Matt. 5. 4.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.



HE שכינ'ה *Shecina*, say the Jewish Doctors, will not rest upon a sad person, that is, God will not be especially with him, nor will his holy Spirit keep him company, that is, a solitary Mourner: and indeed we often find in Scripture, that when the Prophets would invite Gods Spirit down upon they did heighten themselves with mirth; but now, saith Elisha, *bring me a Minstrel, and it came to pass while the Minstrel pla'd, the hand of the Lord came upon him.* And he said, thus saith the Lord, 2 Kings 3. 15. as if the Music had inspir'd him, and his soul was tun'd into Enthusiasme; and so also 1 Sam. 10. 5. *thou shalt meet a company of Prophets coming down from the high place, with a Psaltery, and a Tabret, and a Pipe, and a Harp before them, and they shall prophecy: and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee.* Yea and as God would not dwell with them, so neither would he let them keep him company, they were not to appear before him sad Deut. 12. 7. *And there ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoyce: and therefore God hath no worse expressions for unclean Sacrifices, than the bread of Mourners, Hos. 9. 4. They shall not be pleasing unto him, but their Sacrifices shall be as the bread of Mourners, and as the* *νιξος εἶμα* *לחם לנפשם* *those Sacrifices, for their carcases shall not come into the house of the Lord.* Yea he would not let those Melancholly people keep others company in his service, but there was *porta lugentium*, a gate for Mourners to enter by themselves into the Temple-service, as if the mirth were among their precepts, and to be sad were to be defil'd and unclean. But it is not so with us in the Gospel, where the onely Sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit, a broken and contrite heart he will not despise; but the bread of Mourners shall be the לחם פנים, from which he will never turn away his face, and a few penitent tears are the scope and the fulfilling of all the Jewish purifyings, and the Spirit of the Lord moveth upon the face of these waters; מרחפ' he flutters and hovers over them, and as he did out of the first waters, so out of those tears he hatches a new creation, they being the very first effects and signs of life in the new creature and the new birth also,

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natural to both; Infants and the Child of God also are born weeping and crying, this being the very first throw in regeneration. Yea so far is this sorrow from displeasing God, that it is the great engagement to him to give us comfort both here and hereafter, and it is put amongst Christs first beatitudes here, *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

The words present either a bare description of persons, or withall involve a duty, the being *Mourners*. Secondly import a designation of their condition, that they are *Blessed*. Thirdly they give the reason and the manner of that condition, *For they shall be comforted*; so that mourning may be doubly understood, either as a duty, or as an aphorisme: in the later case *mourning* is taken not to be prescribed at all, but onely Christ looking upon his Disciples who were in the worlds esteem in a sad low condition, he does encourage them, that notwithstanding their unequal estimate, yet they are in a blessed condition, for they shall be sure to be comforted. And thus first it may be as an appendage to the former aphorisme, in that he had by the assurance of a reward encourag'd them in the entertainment of poverty and calamities, had advanc't the lowly into heaven, and enrich't the patient poor with the inheritance of a Kingdom; those that were poor in Spirit, content with their condition; and then this follows, *blessed are those that mourn, for they shall be comforted*; as if it were after this manner: but what if our calamities do grow upon us, and we are not able to bear them with an even mind and a serene countenance, but they cast us down, we grieve and mourn under them and cannot be comforted? yet even for this condition there is promise, Christ is so far from breaking this *bruised reed*, that he confirms and strengthens it; the grievousness of our calamities shall not exclude all hope of ease, neither shall our weakness and infirmity exclude us from the number of the *blessed*: he will neither impute our want of courage, that groans and faints under the burthen, provided that we be not heated by it into impatience at his dispensations, nor chafe into wrath against them that lay it on us, tho we do mourn, if we do not vexe, we are *blessed*; neither will he suffer our calamities, when he hath tried and purg'd us by them, quite to oppress us, but how grievous soever they be, they shall find multitudes of comfort, even the comfort of mitigation, for to that Gods faithfulness is engag'd 1 Cor. 10. 13. *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way also to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* Secondly the internal comforts of Gods grace 2 Cor. 1. 3, 4. *God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulations.* Thirdly the comfort of a joyful recompence, even here for the most part, John 16. 20, 21. *I say unto you ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoyce; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is deliver'd of the child, she remembreth no more the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world.* Our afflictions may be throws, but they shall end in birth, and have the ease and joy of a delivery; and

and therefore our Savior said of himself *πῶς συνέχευμαι* Luke 12. 50. *how am I straitned?* as a woman in child to accomplish his Baptism, that Baptism of agony, sweat and blood; or certainly however an eternal recompence of joy hereafter, *everlasting consolations*, as St Paul saith 2 Theff. 2. 16. When instead of this hunger and thirst and tears *the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: Rev. 7. 17. and 21. 4.*

And first we learn hence the compassion of our Savior, who hath indulg'd us the infirmities of our nature: he hath not made our weak affections to be sins, but hath shew'd us a way to make them advantages towards blessedness; God that was made flesh remembers that we are but flesh, and does not require of us to be insensible, it is not a vice not to be a stock, such as the *Stoicks* requir'd their wise man should be, ἀπαθής, no greif, nor no sense of any external calamity; tho you thrust his hand into the fire, it must be no more to him, than if you burn his staff; for his body is but his organ, his instrument, no part at all of him: but Christ requires no such hard tasks of us. Had he deni'd us our tears, and forbid us the ease of mourning in afflictions, and made weeping to be cowardise and sin, it had bin a *hard saying*, we had had reason to have thought ourselves severely dealt withal: but he gives us leave as it were to love the dear things of this world, a little to weep when they leave us, if we do not love them so as not to love our brother and our God, leaving them if the world leave us, and when by calamities our comforts are taken from us, by frettings and vexations throwing off our God from us, repining at him, and casting his commands away, of not envying, not returning, provided in our tears we have humble perfect submissions and resignations of our selves, throwing our selves down at his feet, and from our very souls saying, *it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good: then* Christ he yeilds to the tenderness of our nature, and provided we mixe no gall with our tears, no bitterness with our weepings, no murmurs nor no grumbings with our groans, he pardons all our weaknesses, and makes our mourning to be but as a call and invitation to him to come to comfort us.

a 1 Sam. 3. 18.

Secondly from the diversity of comforts that belong to every great greiving calamity here, we learn the munificence of our Savior, who does with such infinite advantage return our afflictions; he did himself suffer so many sorrows, and found they were so hard to bear, that for every greif we patiently endure he renders a four-fold comfort, and of those some Divine, the last Eternal. Thus does he reward not our virtues onely (for it is no command of ours to be greiv'd,) but our mischances, our inflictions: he recompences thy enimie's malice to thee with multiplied and eternal consolations, yea he does thus reward thy ease; for such it is to mourn in crosses, our greifs boil out at our eies, and ease their swellings by those eruptions of tears, yet this very ease does he comfort us for, and makes those tears, which for the present do refresh, to be the rivers of Paradise, the fountains of the waters of life; teaches us

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the constant vicissitudes of grief and joy; sorrow and gladness so receive one another constantly, that in this life they that *mourn* ^b *shall be comforted*, they that ^b *laugh shall weep*. Laughter hath in it self more than the tears of sadness, ^{δύστην πένθος ἰσχυρὸν} faith Aristotle, the hurries of delight even in the very wicked weary themselves into a dulness, and die into a sadness; the intemperances rejoyt in bitter risings, and the more forc't and violent the delight is, it is but like the raising the pendant weight, which by how much you lift it up one way, it drives it self so much on the other side; yea in the better sort of Christians the frolicks of these pleasures here below, tho not sinful, do for the most part end in thoughtful sadnesses, careful regrets, not onely in that such persons, when they come to themselves, find themselves estrang'd from God, and from devouter duty; a deadness is upon them, and they must take pains to wind themselves up again: but if with any conscionable care they look into themselves, they shall discern that little loosnesses and vanities and prides and such other companions have insinuated themselves, and crept in with the frolicks; matter for humiliation and sorrow, if they mean to recover the true inward Religious content which never springs with such a stream, as from these serious and retir'd reflections, they that so *mourn* shall find comfort. Thus the Aphorism also hath much truth in order to the two lives, that here and that hereafter.

2. This Aphorism also thus taken bears the full sense of that frequent saying, wherewith people us'd to comfort one another concerning these crosses, *you are happy you have your sufferings in this life*; which sentence, tho it be not true in the full latitude, as thoevery man that suffer'd here had a crown therefore laid up for him; for afflictions may be vengeance for sins, which if they do not reduce us, as many are not better'd by their sufferings, why then they do encrease their score, enhance their reckoning, and tho they be the very beginning of Hell here, yet they do also heat Hell seven times more for them, and their very sufferings make them suffer more hereafter, than if they had not suffer'd here: because such sin against Gods last method of reducing them. Tho this be too frequent truth, yet also there seeming some sufferings allotted to every man, as he that hath had no cross here, needs to look well to his tenure by which he holds his inheritance, since God hath said, *he chastens every son whom he receiveth; and if ye be without chastening, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons*. So also he that runs on in the race of Piety that is set before him, if he do meet with sharp stakes and stumbling blocks that hurt and gall him, yet if he starts up and goes on, he may look upon these as good evidences of his sonship, and security that he hath drunk his cup, and the dregs are not reserv'd for him; and thus both from this text, *blessed are they that mourn*, especially in St Lukes expressing it, *blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh; and wo unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep*, Luke 6. 21, 25. and most clearly from Abraham to the rich man Luke 16. 25. *Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he* is

^c Hebr. 12.
6, 8.

is comforted, and thou art tormented, or as ^d *magistratus* may signify *d* See Cyp. l. 9.
rogatur, now thou Dives art the beggar, *Lazarus* is begg'd of; where *Test. ad Quiri-*
 you see clearly a portion of good and evil things seeming appropri- *num c. 61.*
 ate to every man on earth, each hath his good and evil things,
 and he that hath receiv'd the one may well look for the other: this
 clearly points out a vicissitude of good and evil, of comfort and of
 torment.

Wee learn hence the unequitable mistake of those men, who expect and gape for all good things in both lives, *quadrigis celum petimus*, they would go to heaven in triumphal chariots, and in smooth and broad ways sleep themselves into bliss, have two Paradises, all ease here and heaven hereafter: and even just such is that also of them, that make a calm prosperity here; to be a sign and seal to them that they are in the right way to heaven; thus *Turcism* shall commence the onely true Religion, and *Mahomet* shall dethrone *Christ* from his own purchas'd right hand of God, for he hath the more purple sword; thus succesful iniquity shall advance into piety, and sin by growing predominant, by becoming powerfully and exceeding sinful, accumulate into virtue. No, my Brethren, the comfort is promis'd not to them that have it here; but to the *Mourners*, take heed lest the *Blessings* you receive in this life be call'd your *good things*, or your *consolations*, as *Luke* 6. 24.

I shall give you one sign whereby men may be able in some measure to discern, whether they do esteem, and make them to themselves such; God gives the good things of this world for uses, not to terminate our desires, as things of themselves good: onely He himself, who is the supreme, the last good, can be so; all other are design'd for ends, that do at last look up to him, and are and ought to be subordinate to that last highest end. Health is given to enable us to employ our selves in the actions of some honest calling, for our own maintenance, for the good of others, and for the service of God, and carrying on the works and ends of Providence: so wealth or the provisions we acquire and enjoy, and every other good thing of this life. Now he that thwarts this order or subordination, that lays out his desires on the things themselves, that minds them for their own sake onely, and the satisfaction he himself receives from them without looking further, these are his ends apparently, and so his *good things* which he rests in; which if God permit him to enjoy, he therefore hath his *good things*, and hath no great reason to expect and look for other. Now how miserably does this man delude himself? for this is to prefer the present moment before the following eternity: it is as if the Embryo should wish for a fair spacious wombe, and chuse to spring and leap there for its nine months, rather than to live a pleasant age in a variety of full delights, and so it may but dance in the womb not care to be deliver'd into a dungeon, and born a fetter'd slave: it is to chuse the riot of one meal, one good feast, and to starve the whole remainder of a mans life; yea it is worse, it is to love a pleasant moment more, than he fears eternal Hell, or loves as eternal Heaven. And this will be discern'd, (and is by most of them that live in jollity) when they come to die; when they must

bethink themselves of going hence, and have not consider'd to provide a place, nay have all reason to beleive they have no place provided, but that which God *prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; when they shall think in sad earnest, I have liv'd a pleasant life, and never have deni'd my self an appetite nor thwarted a design, nor yet hath God deni'd me any thing, but Providence hath suffer'd every thing to serve my inclinations, and to gorge my appetites; but I am going now where these unruly appetites, that I have so indulg'd, will infinitely grow, and where all satisfaction will be impossible, and my desires will be my endless torment.

3. This Aphorisme also by pronouncing a present blessedness to the Mourners, lets us see the advantages they have above other men in their journey to Heaven. Delights for the most part they are but the baits and the sawces of sin: by these the Devil and the World and our own Flesh temts us to iniquities, and keeps us fast glew'd in them; this is every mans experience, yea the most innocent delights they are at the best avocations from Heaven, and from better things; they entertain and hold our thoughts upon fading objects, that will never profit us, if it happen that they do not utterly ruin us: whereas the causes of mourning, calamities, yea and the passion it self they beget virtues in us, a whole chain of them; for *tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, experience hope*, Rom. 5. 3, 4. yea indeed they *make us perfect and entire lacking nothing*, Jam. 1. 4. as if to be rob'd and spoil'd of all things were the sure way of wanting nothing, not a vertue certainly, these deep waters of affliction and these tears of ours, that raise the stream, they drive and waft us to our God, *when he smote them, then they sought him and enquir'd after God early*; a storm will make a Mariner pray, and when the tempest beats him down upon his knees he will lift up his hands to Heaven; the Heathen Seamen fled to the true *Jehovah*, when they were ready to suffer shipwrack *Jonah* 1. 14, 16. yea they do not onely drive but wooe us to God, they are temptations in the sense of bait also, *I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness*, saith God *Hos.* 2. 14. when I have made her solitary, put her as in the desert, brought her into the very place of dragons, this shall be my allurements, my inticing wooings of her: and not to loose the experience of this, *S^t Chrysostom* hath given it in the frequent example of men of most effeminate, loose, dissolute lives, yet by a cause of mourning, by the loss of a bosom wife, of a dear onely heir they become (at least for that time of greif) strict and severe; how do they banish all soft delights, no curious provision for the flesh, but more than Philosophical abstinence almost to the pining of themselves, watches and silence, quiet and humble prostrations of themselves, unspeakable meekness, huge commiseration of all that are afflicted, these are their passions and their exercises; for a while they so contemn the world, think it so little worth their moiling for, that now it is not worth a wish; in that time should a fire seize on all they had, or a spoiler run away with all, it would scarce divert a thought or eye to it from their sad melancholly object, they look upon all gilded pomps and soft pleasures as cloath'd with the same dark sable that themselves have on, they

they are almost ready to betake themselves to the wife's sepulchre, running to inhabit that chamber of death, and again to marry themselves in that cold bed the grave; so easily will mourning wean us. In this dimness of anguish, and darkness as of the shadow of death, we should not run to hugg and embrace glowworms, but prostrate our selves in this dust and ashes, and with sad serious repentance set on mourning, which shall bring me to the consideration of the words as of a duty.

And first of the duty in general: now the mourning here being oppos'd to them that laugh in *S^t Luke*, the thing forbidden in the duty may be all foolish lightness in conversation and manners, all vanity, looseness and wantoness, all uncomely behaviors or jestings, all freer recreations that beget or are accompani'd with any of these; and the duty be in part the same with that in the *Phil. 4. 8.* *You must, if any things be grave, think on these things*, saith he there, gravity being the very garb of a Mourner. Not that I would have this duty to exclude all recreation, which also according to the persons with whom it is, may be innocently light; as with children serious toys are no sport for them. But

1. Recreation must be such as may cherish health and strength, and unbend the mind by diverting it; for to weary my self by my refreshment is to contradict the very aim of it, to make my recreation need another sport to refresh me after the toil of my laborious idleness: and therefore also

2. It must be moderate; otherwise it does exchange with my calling, and my refreshment becomes my employment: and

3. It must be innocent; I must not make it my sport to offend God; it is too dangerous a recreation to jest with and provoke the Almighty, to play with sin, and to sport away a virtue is of too ill consequence: and the duty of the text saith also it should be

4. According to the condition of my person, somewhat grave, not so extremely light and vain; and if you would by these examine the usual delights, first all freer revelling, which if they be in pleasures of the taste, end frequently in intemperance, are accompanied with foolish discourses, very oft prophane; and with swearings, idle and bitter jestings at those which are present, and detractions of those that are absent, whence proceed quarrels and the like: they are also full of apishness in the process of them below the gravity of common sense, much more of a Christian, a member of the Son of God: we should find these, I say, to jarr with more than one of the former requisites of recreation. Some other sorts are oft the instruments of infinite vanity, the great engines of lasciviousness and lust. Wanton Songs and unchast books, these very things they put a focus upon sin, and they dress iniquity with all the adulteries of possible art, that they may the more enticingly prostitute her: here are young souls ensnar'd by these, to whom the very description of sin is invitation and conquest. *Do not sit by a woman that is a Singer*, saith the wise Son of *Syrach*; and if innocent beauty be irresistible temptation, if it do at once assault both at the eyes and ears, charge the soul with charms at both those ports, how then shall the very pleasure of that temptation, the wantoness

it self be resistible, when it comes drest with harmony, when it do's melt the imagination into the soft looseness of its own smooth airs and gentle warblings? How shall they escape when they see sin cloath'd in all the flowers of Rhetorick as books present, when they see the example of men tempting to it and learn the method, when they see it acted, and the delight of it exprest with all the advantages of sinful art, with very prurient words, and committing language. Some others, as great gamings, (not that I condemn the thing in general) when they are us'd with much appetite, either of the sport it self or of the price, they become immoderate, too much time is spent upon them. And *Causinus* saith, did a man commit no other sin, but conversing a good part of his life with kings and knaves of cards, being invited to the conversation of Angels, yet were it no small offence. But besides that they are the nurses of anger, they dictate ill language, and they are the apprenticeship of cursings, oaths, and blasphemy: so that if you put all these together; you shall find that by all these recreations we do but bait and tempt our sins, we do the Devils work against our selves; and we that know our strength is not miraculous, that find how oft and easily we fall, are bound in conscience to avoid those things which we find are occasions to us of sin: and if you would instead of those impressions, which the vain pleasures of those recreations do leave upon your desires, entertain and heighten these few considerations to your selves, it might a little bridle.

1. A Christian is a mourner, my blacks, my dark sad veils are spread over me; and should I see a woman in that habit, and, while it was new, go to revels, sing obscene catches, and spend much of her time in gamings, what would I think of that woman? Why even the same strumpet, lewd thing is my soul, that in the days of her mourning does thus luxuriate. And is it not a sad thing that a Christian, (a very serious name, that) a man, that hath the delights of heaven to refresh himself with, that hath God to converse with, should not yet know how to pass his time without these lighter vain follies, which yet he would be loath to do before a man of quality and discretion; yea that he cannot refresh himself without sinful delights, that he must go take a walk in Hell to divert himself for fear he nauseate upon Heaven?

2. All the holy Angels, that so great cloud of witnesses, they look upon me acting these my impertinent ridiculous follies, and it do's break off their melody; they mourn to see me, a Christian, a man that should be one of them, thus foolishly passing my irrevocable time, idly spending my hours of repentance, and vainly throwing away my possibilities of Heaven, and doing this so unseemly, destroying my self with lightness and to no purpose.

3. How many now do mourn in their state and expectation of miseries, and with sad yellings bewail their lost hours, and the sins which their lightnesses and recreations drew upon them, the curses and ill language of their gaming, the fornications of the lusts which their songs and dances did provoke them to, and the intemperance of their revels, and the idle words of all of them in general, of which yet our Savior saith we must give an account? and have I not reason

reason to fear the same expectations and woes? and then had I not better be a little more serious and grave, put on the strictness and severity of a Christian here, unless I can resolve, so I may but sing wantonly here, not to care tho I howl in hell eternally, so I may but revel and drink here, let the never-dying worm for ever gnaw upon the very marrow of my soul, and Gods fury drink up my spirits, and my self for ever suffer the perpetual thirst of feavor, dwell with everlasting burnings, and rather than I will put on black and be a mourner here, I will be thrust into the land of utter darkness, *g* Matt. 8. 12. where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth?

But I will now descend to the particular exercises of this duty, of which I will name but two: the first is to bewail and mourn for the calamities that befall or are impendent on a Church and State, or any member of it, either others or our selves, without considering whether this be like to be our case or no; I onely put it in the general as a duty, and a particular exercise of this in the text: whensoever any judgment do befall a Land, to be truly humbled and sadded by it, and to compassionate any one that is afflicted by it, and as *S^t Paul* bid us *Rom. 12. 15. to weep with them that weep.* Now to move us to this, he that is not affected, he declares plainly, that he is no fellow-member of him whose sufferings he does not partake in, nor a part of that Church in whose judgment he is not humbled; for saith *S^t Paul* *1 Cor. 12. 26. if one member be afflicted, all the rest suffer with it:* and experience saith it too, and then shall the body of our Head Christ, a whole Church be wounded and maim'd, have its last death-pangs upon it, lie struggling and gasping, and we unmov'd at this, have the same full delights, and tast them too, feel no gripes, no sympathy of convulsions, and shall we yet think our selves members of that body of Christ? Oh no, we hold not of the Head our Savior, we have no communion with him; for if we had, we should have communion of sufferings, a fellow-sense. There is no such convincing sign as this in the world, this flowing from the very nature of greif; for greif cannot properly be but for an evil that is some way annexed and proper to our selves, *de malo conjuncto*; for as appetite is implanted for the use of him in whom it is implanted, so it is not proper to it to have any averfation to evil, except it be some way evil to him whose appetite hath that averfation, and to greive at misery I must some way conceive it to concern my self. Now then as he that does not conceive himself a member of a Church, nor a fellow member, nor any way relating to it, he cannot truly greive; so he that does not greive, declares no communion with it, he is another thing, a member quite cut off or dead, and so stupid and insensible. Such a judgment doest thou pass upon thy self whoever doest not mourn, outlawest and excommunicatest thy self, neither belongst to Church nor State, nor yet to Christ.

2. As thou hast no charity to thy Brother, nor to thy afflicted Mother; so neither hast thou any love to God, whose glory tho it be asserted by the punishment of a sinful Land or Church, he is also still dishonor'd by the sins which do then reign, and to which he does permit for the most part the punishment of sin, and that power and authority or discipline which divisions in the Church cut short, hath
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for its consequent all unbridled looseness and profaneness, Blasphemy and Atheisme; the calamities of a State are embitter'd by all sorts of licences that grow when Government is weakn'd: to see a whole Land mourn with the dark purple of its blood, all which blood as it is the punishment of that Nation, so it is the guilt also to see the wickedness of a Kingdom plagu'd with the ruin of many thousands of men's lives and thousands of souls too that fell in actual iniquity, and yet to think that this plague is the greatest wickedness of all, arm'd with the most crying sins that are, that the very punishment must call for punishment and revenge of it self, and help to make up the measure of judgment, that the sentence of desolation may be irreverfible and utter, to see two inundations overflow the Land, two abyffes of blood and guilt, and *one deep calling upon another* to meet and swallow us and bury us in their graves of sin and deep ruin: yea to see iniquity become impudent and sin triumphant, which is the great sign of utter ruin as it was to the *Jews*, an omen worse than Comets or Blazing-stars, & the dismal voice of *μαρτυρία ἐν τῇ πόλει*, yea and in this ruin too I do not see how any will well free themselves from guilt; for if they be the ruiners they are the great spoilers, the finners if the ruined; they have contributed to make those others the sinful inflictors: and if in all this there be not matter for a little mourning, if God dishonor'd, souls destroy'd, lives perishing, Church ruining, and nothing but sin flourishing, and ourselves not unguilty, and if this be not an object for our tears, we are the most uncharitable, most obdurate creatures in the world, *Niobe's* stone is not fit to be our embleme, for that stone could sweat tears; we are more rock than that which *Moses* struck, whom the rod of God cannot make weep, we are next degree to *Lucifer* himself, for onely Hell is sure at ease to see its company increafe.

3. Lastly this not mourning in the judgment of a Nation is a sin which God does most heavily characterize and threaten, *Amos* 6. 1, 6, 7, 8. *Isaiah* 22. when the Prophet had describ'd how it should be in the day of desolation v. 4, 5. then because they did not do it, see the judgment v. 12, 13, 14. yea this very thing, that men are insensible, is as it were the very last judgment on a Nation, and the sign of utter rejection, *Jer.* 16. 5, 6, 7.

But how can this duty of mourning consist with those so frequent Gospel-Commands to rejoyce in utmost afflictions? *James* 1. 2, 3. *Count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience:* and *S^t Paul* most often. 'Tis true indeed we are to rejoyce in them, because they are Gods methods of bettering us; by them he does purge ad cleanse us, *Isaiah* 4. 4, 5. and *c.* 1. 25, 27. *Redeem'd with judgment, even with the judgment that I shall execute upon them.* But then

1. What reason have we to mourn also that we are such foul sinners as to need such ways of purging, that Christs death should not have motive enough in it to turn us from iniquity, that his blood should not be sufficient laver enough to wash us but our own must be pour'd out also, that our air should be so infected that nothing but an universal conflagration can purify, that we should be such refractory stubborn persons, whom no-
thing

thing but wounding will do good upon, nothing but ruin will reduce? But then

2. How are we more to mourn that this very method should not be able to reduce us, that we will run upon lashes, swords and deaths to sin, that in the midst of judgments and against them too we commit iniquity, that every stripe does encrease our reckoning, add to our iniquities, & no possible method left to reduce them whom correction will not make sensible; but our villainies grow up with our sufferings, and our sins are fatned by our blood, as the land is.

Yea lastly how are we to mourn that to the rest of our sins this also is added by us, of not mourning at our judgments, but using all possible means to prevent it, to lay a sleep the sense of any judgment that is upon the Nation, to be so far from bestowing one hour of sadness upon those so grand motives to it, that they do all they can to keep it from them; and if those judgments happen to some, they look upon it carelessly, as a thing that does not concern, rather as a matter onely of rejoycing; if to others whom they wish well to, they search out wine and vice to quench and to divert the memory and thought of it, to drown sad news in sadder sin; this is to labor hard lest sadness and a virtue should creep upon me, to search out means to assist me to keep Gods last method from doing any good upon me: this is one cause of greatest judgment *Isaiah* 5. 11, 12, 13, 14.

The second and indeed the great exercise of this duty in the text, is to mourn for our sins; and

First for the infirmities of our nature, that stain that we were born with, that engagement to death that we brought into the world with us, and which is a clog and weight upon us throughout the whole course of our lives to disable us from doing our duty as we ought.

Secondly for the sins of our habits, whereby we have advanc't those infirmities into customs, made a covenant with that death to which we were born engag'd, and our whole practice is the exercise of those things whose wages is death eternal; or if we are not gon so far in vicious customes, yet for the gross foul acts which men sometimes commit, those unkind stabs and wounds to our own souls, those cruel self-murders, these all are to be daily mourn'd for. Now I shall onely name a few reasons why we should mourn, and so stir us up to it.

1. Because onely in this and in relation to this is greif of any use at all: God and Nature, they say, made nothing in vain; now if it were not for our sins greif would be almost in vain, a certain sign that this passion must be employ'd upon our sins, *ut propter hujus tantum sublationem sit concessa*, saith *S^r Chrysostom*. For does any man loose a child? why if he greive to death will his mourning raise him? Is thy Estate taken from thee? why thou art sad upon it, but will thy tears recover it? But hast thou sin'd, and dost thou truly mourn and greive for it? why thy tears do wash away thy sin and blot out thine offence. So that mourning being every where else preposterous and unprofitable, was clearly intended to be spent upon our sins.

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2. What ingratitude is it to thy Savior not to find in thine heart to mourn for those sins for which he did die; the Son of God did sweat, and pray, and cry, and shed a torrent of blood and water, and suffer death for those very sins of thine and mine which we think so slightly of, that we will not shed a tear for them? O my Brethren, if there is in us any love of that our Jesus, or indeed of our selves, we would now transplant the Agonies, and make them ours, and sweat out a few drops of sorrow to cure us of those feavors of our sins.

3. Yea it is a very trouble to our God that we do not grieve, he mourns to see that we will not mourn, *Hosea 13. 14.* when God had complain'd before of *Ephraim*, what a foolish child it was that it did not repent; he tells them there, that if they had don so, *I would have ransom'd them from the power of the grave,* (not I will, for the very next verse contradicts that) *I would have redeem'd them from death, O death, I had bin thy grave, O grave I had bin thy destruction; but comfort is hid from mine eyes: (repentance we read, but the word bears and the sense requires comfort,) as if the eyes of the Lord were therefore full of tears, because Ephraim's were not, and he could not receive comfort, if Ephraim did not mourn: and if we do not mourn, God will comfort himself some other way concerning us to our greif, Isaiah 1. 24. Therefore thus saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, the Mighty one of Israel, ah! I will ease me of mine adversaries, אֶתֵּן the very word before I will be comforted by reason of mine adversaries; how? why I will avenge me of mine enemies.* Ah my Brethren when God is to be comforted by his vengeance upon us, when he can find no ease but in our ruin and destruction, and that he calls his comfort in relation to the non-mourning impenitent, where shall we find ease and comfort then?

And then methinks this should scare us into the use of this, fright us out of that stupid lethargy in sinning, which does so dull us in it, makes us so senseless of it and the danger we are in by reason of it, that we cannot bestow one day in weeping, mourning, and fasting, no nor indeed an hour of serious sadness upon an age of sin, a whole life of iniquity: the very next step of this into which we shall be sure to fall, is the greatest sin and judgment in the world, it is that spoken of as a character of the foulest Heathens, *Ephes. 4. 18. 19. Having their understandings darkned, being alienated from the life of God thro the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness that is in their heart; who being past feeling have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness:* rather because of the brawny hardness of their hearts, which are become callous, insensible of any admonitions, stings and greif, but dead to all sense of sin, and having put off all fear of it; and who these are he tells you in the next words οἱ τῶν ἀπολογιστῶν, such as when they do the foulest acts, are not toucht with any greif for having don them, but like dead members of the body that are forsaken by the vital spirits, if you lash or prick or lance them, they feel no pain: even so these whose consciences are retir'd & a sleep, they do not mourn for any of their foulest actions, which is the very height of impiety; for such do strait give themselves over to all filthiness to work all uncleanness with greediness.

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This is the effect of not mourning, and then how do they deserve and provoke this judgment, who if at any time their conscience begin to twinge them for any of their sins, they presently divert their thoughts, lest the mourning in the text should creep upon them, and they should grow sad? These men dread their virtue, they are afraid of becoming pious, and to avoid the way to heaven is their design and contrivance; they come not so near duty as the wicked in hell, have not so much repentance as the damned have; for there is sorrow for their sins, *weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth*.

I should 2^{dly} encourage those that do thus mourn, but the text does that sufficiently, they are *blest*, and *they shall be comforted*.

First they are *blest* for this mourning, it is the great effect and sign of this Spiritual life; that man's sickness hath not yet kill'd him, who is sensible of it, who greives by reason of the anguish of it, and he is not dead who feels the weight of it and mourns for it.

Secondly if it be true, it draws such a train of virtues after it, as it made *S^t Paul* rejoyce that he had made the *Corinthians* sad, *2 Cor. 9, 10, 11.* and then this very same verse will assure them of the comfort hereafter; for all the Gospel-promises are assur'd upon the terms of repentance, which this Godly sorrow is the first link of, and does draw after it: & then if there be any comfort in the company of myriads of Saints and Angels, if we dare take Christ's judgment, if he had any tast who suffer'd so many mourning fits, that liv'd a life of tears here, that often wept but never laugh'd, yea a life of horrid suffering, and yet thought those comforts a full glorious recompence to him for all those sufferings, and therefore may well be to us for a few tears; if there be any joy in the beatifical vision and in heaven, they shall be comforted that mourn, when as I told you out of *Revelations*, *all tears shall be wip'd from their eyes, there shall be no more trouble, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain.* And yet this is but the Negative part of their eternity of bliss, which to conceive is to be as God, and to enjoy is to be one with him.

And O thou Blessed Jesu, the eternal Lord of all those comforts, be favourable unto us thy servants, that turn to thee with weeping and with mourning, that do with hearty bewailing for our hardness desire thee to teach our souls with some compunction for those iniquities that did put thee to death and would ruin us, to break our rocky hearts, that they may stream out tears for those our sins which shed thy blood, and would cast us into eternal wailings; and as thou hast humbled us into the dust, and prostrated our very souls unto the ground, to grant unto us to sit down in that dust and to bewail our own demerits, which our very ruin can neither equal nor amend. O suffer us not to be so obdurate, as to prove unmoveable by all thy pressures, insensible of our own miseries and sufferings, and such as amidst the pains of sin do still retain the malice and the obstinacy, and then at last by these thy methods and our greifs recover us from the follies of our lives, close our eyes and withdraw our affections from the tempting lightnesses and vanities of our conversations; and fix our thoughts and appetites upon thy serious comforts, those heavenly refreshments after so much

much sadness, that we being reckon'd amongst them whom thou dost chasten, put into the number of thy mourners, whose share of sorrows are dispenc't in this life, may have title to *the inheritance of Sons*, the joys of blessedness, and the portion of eternal consolations in the land of everlasting pleasures with thee *the Lamb that wert slain*, and art therefore worthy to receive all honor, power, praise, might, majesty, and dominion with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and for evermore.

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S E R M O N

VII.

OF THE CLEANSING POWER

Of Christian HOPE.

1 John 3. 3.

Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself as he is pure.



HOPE is of all others the most active passion, setting all the rest of them and the whole man on work; for who would ever do or desire any thing, if he did not hope for some good by it? It is this hope alone that employs all the men and all the professions of the world: it is the wings of the Desires and Actions, carrying them thro the greatest difficulties with courage and alacrity, with Confidence and an unwearied Constancy, *Ad bonas spes pertinax animus est.* Never will a man leave so long as he does hope, and of all hopes that of the Christian should be the most active; because it aims at the highest good, in comparison of which all other good things are but shadows. For what are the pleasures of earth to the things of God, not worthy to be the expressions, no nor the foils of them? Now we see the greater the hopes, the more active men are in the pursuit of them; for who is there that will take so much pains for a Cottage, as for a Crown? And is it not then a wonder, that of all Hopes yet this Hope of Heaven should be the least effectual in the minds of men; and of all pleasures those of God should least invite, and least imploy us? For what one is there that does not with more eager and constant industry pursue the hopes of profit or the hopes of pleasure, than he does the hopes of Immortality and of Blessedness? How few are there that do not spend more time and more endeavors, take more and longer pains in their Sports than in their Religion? which could not certainly be, if they had not surer and greater hopes of joy from their sports, than from Heaven; for the greater hope would certainly set them the more on work. No, Heaven is a thing of no taste, carries no profit, no pleasure in the meaning of it; for if it did it would employ them in the gaining of it, and every one that *had this hope, would purify himself as he is pure, Matth. 5. 8.*

If the inheritance of the Kingdom of God were, as some were

a 1 Cor. 6.
9, 10.

upon earth, entail'd, so that do they what they will, they could not be put by it, there were then some reason not to wonder, wherefore we see men live in the broad way to Hell and yet then hope to come to Heaven: and certainly nothing but such a perswasion as that can possibly lull men into such a wretchless security as they are possess'd with, in a thing of this eternal consequence. For if we should examin them, the most sinful wretch of them all hath hopes to be sav'd, yea he would not be able to stand under the burden and the horror of his own killing thoughts, if he should but once despair of that: so that hope he will, and yet if he believe one jot of Scripture, it is impossible for him to hope it. For that bids him not ^a be deceiv'd, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. So that he dares not not hope, and yet if he do but ask himself, he knows he cannot hope: and what then makes him do it? Certainly the opinion that such and such the inheritance is entail'd upon, and be they what they will, they shall have Heaven. But alas! they are mistaken in the nature of the inheritance; we may read of many that were cast off, and the Heir must be a servant as long as he is a child, if he do not obey, no hopes of his arriving at his inheritance when he is come to age. St John here will dash all those vain hopes, and will tell them as they cannot justly hope, for none such as they can be possess'd of that inheritance; and therefore 'tis to no purpose for them to hope it. So also that they do not indeed hope; for if they did ever expect to arrive at Heaven, they would not run on in a course, that leads a clean contrary way.

The Apostle here propounds five Arguments to exhort them to the study of Piety, to press after Holiness, and to leave off their courses of sin. I shall name them backwards. First in the tenth verse if we be Christians we not onely will not, but *cannot sin*. Yea secondly we are indeed *Children of the Devil*, if we do v. 8. Neither thirdly have we any *Communion with Christ* possibly, or interest in his *Righteousness* v. 6, 7. Nay fourthly they destroy the very *end of Christ's coming into the world* v. 5. Lastly in the front of all these neither can they hope to enjoy any of those glorious promises, that God hath made to his Children, those of giving them glory and immortality; *For he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself as he is pure.*

In the handling of these words I shall shew you what it is to purify himself. Secondly what kind of purity he is to strive after, *as he is pure*. Thirdly what the Hope of a Christian is, *this Hope*. Fourthly how that Hope does set a man on purifying, *He that hath this Hope purifies himself*.

For the first what it is to purify I shall onely name, it is to cleanse from all mixture of pollution, and how far it is to extend, is set down by St Paul upon the very same grounds with those in the Text, ^a *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness both of the Flesh and Spirit*: and St James ^b *Cleanse your hands you sinners, and purify your hearts you double-minded: and they both mean thus much; that for external actions, Christian pu-*
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* 2 Cor. 7. 1.

^b James 4. 8.

urity tho it will admit of slips and failings, yet it is not consistent with continuance in any known sin. And therefore *David* tho he were said to be *a man after Gods own heart*, and that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, (the very description of pure) yet it is added *save in the matter of Uriah*. For first it never does admit any filthiness of Flesh, but must be universal; and it is in this true what *S^t James* saith c. 2. v. 10. *Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*: God had before affirm'd the same expressly *Ezek.* 18. 10, 11, 12, 13. *If he beget a son that is a robber, and that doth the like to any one of these things, and hath defild his neighbours wife, hath oppressed the poor and needy &c. shall he then live? he shall not live, he hath don all these abominations, he shall surely die*. So that in Gods fight he that hath don any one of these things, he hath don all these abominations: for it is plain, that those he had not don he abstain'd not from, because God had forbidden them; for then he had abstain'd from that which he had don, God had forbidden that; so that his abstinences are not innocence, but squeamishness or fear. Either he does not like them, or he dares not do them for some worldly reason; and he does not only let God see he can abstain for such considerations as these, but will not for his Promises or his authority. He values these below the mode or fashion of the world, or his respect to some other person, or any little interest or humor.

2. Neither does this purity admit any filthiness of the Spirit, we must purify our hearts; and for internal purity the rule is, that to abstain from outward actions of sin is not enough, but the heart must be cleansed also: this is proved already. And indeed to deny my flesh the pleasures of the flesh, and yet to let my mind dwell upon them and enjoy them; not to commit them, and yet suffer my soul to do it, is to transplant the sin, to make my soul act the deeds of the flesh, and my very spirit become carnal. This is at the best to give God the worst part of my services, and the Devil the best: my heart and soul the Devil enjoies; God hath nothing but a few outward abstinences. What a mixture is here, how far from purity; God and the Devil join'd together, and the Devil having the upper hand, the better portion?

Thus in general, but to tell you what kind of purity we are to strive after, I shall touch at some few Scripture wordings of it.

1. *Holiness*. For *pure* and *holy* are often join'd *2 Cor.* 7. 1. *Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord*. Now the true notion of holiness consists in a setting apart, or discrimination from other things or persons. And therefore holiness of life is the observing that peculiar different form of life, which God hath commanded those whom he hath call'd, not being conform'd to the fashion of the world. As *S^t James* saith pure Religion, not to live after the common manner of men, common and holy being every where oppos'd: so that when God is said to call us to holiness, he requires us to consecrate our lives to his service, to look upon our selves as things sacred. Hence Christians are call'd *living Sacrifices holy to God Rom.* 12. 1. *Temples of the Holy Ghost 1 Cor.* 6. 19. and

and all names of Holiness are set upon them to shew how strict a necessity lies upon us to separate our selves from all carnal wordly uses and defilements.

2. The *Pure* are exprest by *Virgins* 2 Cor. 11. 2. *For I am jealous over you with a Godly jealousy*, that is, as a strict careful Parent over his beloved maiden daughter, so that *I may present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ*. Every gross impurity deflowers the soul, and when it sins it plays the strumpet. And if a bride, that on her wedding day should play the harlot, and give away that Virginity which she had but then promised to her Husband, would certainly not dare to stand the wrath of her furious Bridegroom that should catch her in her villany: how wilt thou meet the jealousy of thy Spouse, when as thou spreadst thy self to every temptation, committest perpetual whoredoms with the World and flesh, and doest continually act disloyalty in the very eyes of his glory? Certainly the same jealous care and earnest desires that are employ'd in seeking a wife that is not vitiated, this very expression of *Virgin* does direct us to make use of in watchfulness over our selves, that sin do not devirginate us, that we do not present a strumpet to Christ for his Spouse; but that he may find us Virgins at the Marriage of the Lamb. Yea that we may see what kind of ones also, St Paul expresth their Purity Ephes. 5. 27. *not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish*. For as every gross Sin does deflowr the Soul, and make it no Virgin; so every lighter fault is a spot upon the cheek, a wrinkle in the forehead in Christs eyes. And if chastity shall be severely guarded out of a respect to future hopes of marriages, which there is no hopes to be successful in, if that be blasted; if to please a Suiter the glass shall be consulted with, every stain shall be adorn'd, cover'd, made a beauty-spot; and all methods (sometimes more then honest) us'd to keep the forehead smooth, the cheek full and plain, not content with the Lords workmanship upon them they will outdo their Maker, and create to themselves beauties that God and Nature never did intend them: if men do avoid wrinkles in a Bride, as they would do a Deaths-head or *memento mori* in their bridal bed, can we then think our selves, whom every day bespots, and stains, every hour adds such wrinkles to, whose souls have more of those furrows than our lives have minutes, who are indeed onely bundles of deformities, besides our gross whoredoms; can we, I say, think our selves a fit Spouse for Christ? Is he the onely Bridegroom to be thus provided for? Can we have confidence to present a Strumpet to him for a Bride, and care not that he find us Virgins at the Marriage of the Lamb? Or can we expect any thing but an eternal divorce from him, whom we have thus us'd.

I have given you some expressions by which you may judg what kind of Purity we are to aim at: I shall come a little nearer that of the Text by one or two more.

3. *Purity* and *Holiness* are exprest in Scripture by *White Raiment*, *Revel. 3. 18. a White Robe, c. 7. 9. for the Fine Linnen is the Righteousness of the Saints*, as it there follows. Now the reason of this compellation is, it is call'd *Raiment* because it is to cover our nakedness

kedness and our shame; for our sins are accounted such. In Gods eyes every wicked person is the same thing as a deform'd creature with his nakedness shamefully uncover'd and prostituted. This is clear out of those places *Rev. 16. 15. least he walk naked, and they see his shame. Rev. 3. 18. Buy of me White Raiments, that thou mayst be cloth'd, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.* For that it is call'd *Raiment*, and *White Linnen* because of the Purity. White is the purest color, the least spot or stain is immediately discern'd upon it: and if it be upon Fine Linnen, makes it presently cast off by them, whose glory it is to be neat and clean, it shall no more come neer them till the spots and stains be wash'd off. And Oh that we had but this pride for our souls, that we were but as ambitious to have our immortal Spirits neatly deckt when we appear in Gods sight, as our putrifying carcases when we go in company: that when we slip or fall, and when a spot does stain this Linnen even of Righteousness, that we would instantly wash it in our tears and the blood of Christ, the laver that is prepar'd for this Linnen, for *they made their garments white in the blood of the Lamb*: and that for the time to come we would be but as careful of keeping it neat, of preserving it from stains, as we are of finer linnen. And God himself makes use of our pride in that kind to be our exprobation *Jer. 2. 32. Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me dayes without number.* And sure I am, the expression of *Fine Linnen* aims at a great degree of Purity, when it calls that careful conscionable duty the *walking* worthy of the Christian calling, whereunto we are called, even the walking diligently in all the Commandments of God; calls I say, this Righteousness *fine linnen clean and white*: for it is the very expression of that pure clothing that we shall be dress'd in at our wedding with Christ, it is our spousal linnen when we go to meet our Bridegroom *Rev. 19. 7, 8. The Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made her self ready, and to her was granted that she should be arrai'd in fine linnen clean and white*, to teach us that we should be always as careful of our ways, always dress'd in mind, and so prepar'd, as if we were to go and meet our Bridegroom. Yea it is the expression of that pure Clothing, which we shall be cloth'd in Heaven with, where we shall be *pure as God is pure*, perfectly holy: *Rev. 3. 4. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white*; to let us see that this expression by which our Righteousness is call'd *white clothing*, requires us to have our conversation in Heaven, even while we are here; to make our lives here but as a preparation to that Marriage-feast, to be but the time of dressing our selves before hand. For we must array our selves in *fine linnen*, the very same dress in which we must walk with Christ; for, *they shall walk with me in white*, saith he: yea 'tis his own dress also, for the garments of Christ, Moses and Elias in the Mount was *white shining Raiment*. Holiness is transfiguration upon earth: so that this compellation from our daily diligence in the cleansing and the keeping of our linnen does direct us to the same diligence in neatness of our souls, and requires of us such a Purity as with which God is pure.

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4. Purity

4. Purity it is called *light*, as also *sin* is called *darkness* Rom. 13. 12. Put ye off the works of darkness and put ye on the armor of light: and Matth. 5. 16. Let your light so shine before men; and that very fitly, because nothing so pure as light, so clear as shine and noon-day, it is the most pure of all visible creatures, it is not possible so much as to fully shine or to spot the light; the foulest dung-hill that it can shine upon, does not at all defile it; you may put out the day, but you cannot stain it. And truly no expression comes near the Purity of Light, for it is so clean as it is set to express the very Holiness of God himself, 1 John 1. 5. *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all.* And therefore while our Piety is called *light*, it teaches us that we labor to be *pure as he is pure*; the kind of Purity, which how it is, St James hath set down c. 1. 17. where he explains this very expression, *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* They are Astronomical expressions belonging to the Lights of Heaven: God is not like them that change oft; not like the Moon that hath its tides of light, now full, and then dark; nor is he like the Sun, he hath not any *Equas Tropick*, who when he is come near to us and makes summer, then turns back again and goes fromward us: neither must our Light have any such, our Holiness must have no Solstice; our Devotion sometimes mounting with a bright and holy flame as it would breath up into Heaven it self, sometimes fainting and sinking as it would expire and die: now our endeavors strong and violent, we strive, pant and climb; afterwards we slacken and go backwards. Neither yet a waning Moon, Holiness ebbing and flowing, now increasing, then again decaying; which tho it be sometimes glorious with a full shine, is yet otherwhile the darkest part of the whole Firmament. It must not be so with our Piety, sometimes at a Sermon, or before a Communion, or upon some sharp rebuke of Gods in an affliction, cross, or other occasion very high and shining; but then again at another time like the New-Moon no light at all; the Devotion is sunk and extinct, and our vanities possess us wholly. No fits of Purity, Paroxysms of Piety, that come like the heats of agues now and then, but with great intervals between, will serve the turn; but it must give a constant shine. Devotion must be a fixt Light, such as is not variable and turning; and so this expression shews how we must purify *as he is pure*, with kind, I say, not with degree. For the Text does not mean that we should be as pure as he; to aim at such a virtue were Rebellion, and the hopes of such a Purity were *Lucifers* Ambition, and would throw us down to Hell. Neither yet pure as he is pure, without any mixture of spot or stain. For while we are made up of a mixt composition, we shall never be so pure, neither is any such exacted of us. All the meaning is, if we have hopes to be like God hereafter with glorious likeness, we must endeavor also to be like him here; and that is don by endeavoring after Purity, forasmuch as God is pure.

Here is then an efficacious motive for us to labor after Purity, it makes

makes us like God. To be a Child or a Son in Scripture is the same thing as to be like, or do such works as the other does: *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and his works ye do*, John 8. 44. and what in one place is said *That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven*, in an other place is, *that ye may be like your Father*. For whatever the Children of a Natural Father be, Gods Children must be like him, or they are not his; and the way to be so is but to labor after Holiness, to be still amending by little and little, daily cleansing out some sin or other: he vouchsafes to call this *purifying as he is pure*, he calls such a person like him and his Child.

But secondly whose Children are they and like whom, who go on still in their courses of wickedness? and if they do not grow daily worse, as few there are that do not, yet they never think of growing better, if we should examin them by the expressions we have given.

And take them first to that of *Light*, by which we saw a holy Conversation was stil'd, we shall in that see the sad condition of a wicked person, his life is all darkness: that sore Plague of *Egypt*, which three days made intolerable, is still upon the Sinners Soul, nothing but night about him. And indeed nothing else befits his deeds of darkness, as sins are call'd; which how glorious and splendid soever they seem to him, the onely modes and gallantry, yet alas the splendor of them is but like the shine of lightning, full of horror in it self, and makes the darkness of the night also more irksom. And what can these men, that have no light, whose deeds are all the deeds of night and darkness; what can they expect but to be *cast at last into utter darkness, where there is onely weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth?*

2. If we take them to the other expression of *White Raiment*, how will they whose open exemplary sins do strip them and expose them naked, have reason to be asham'd, and to cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a clo'e? How wretchedly stupid is the heart of this People that glory in their shame, that count their sins the onely gaudy bravery? when as poor souls *they are miserable, and poor, and naked*, Rev. 3. 17. There was no such disgraceful thing as to have the uncomly parts of the body laid open to publick sight: so *Hannun* us'd *Dauids* Ambassadors, whom he thought Spies 2 Sam. 10. 4. which was occasion enough for a war upon them. And God expresses *Isaiah* 20. 4. *He shall lead away the Egyptians Prisoners, naked with their buttocks uncovered to the shame of Egypt*. And you may see what God threatens to adulterous *Israel*, *Isaiah* 3. 16, &c. and much more at large in *Ezek.* 16, and 23. *that she might be laugh'd to scorn, and had in derision*, and might be an infamous woman. And in one place he threatens to discover her by throwing her cloths over her head. Now I have shew'd you that Holiness is the onely Virginity, and sin is the Souls whoredom; and the expression that I have in hand tells you that Holiness is the onely garment, and the openest of finning is the Souls nakedness; which if you put together, you will see, that a profane person, an open finner is the same scorn'd thing, as a whore with her cloths over her head, a bare strumpet acting naked lewdness in high ways, with her unexpressible filthiness expos'd in publick to eyes and shame. And is such a thing as this fit

to go to God, or to be a Spouse of Christ? No his Bride must be
^h Heb. 12. 14. array'd in *fine white linnen*, that is the *righteousness of the Saints*, ^h and
without holiness no one shall see him: For he that hath that hope, must
purify himself, as he is pure.

This Hope. What Christian Hope is: it is a patient and a comfortable expectation of the performance of all Gods Promises. Patient expectation it is *Rom. 8. 25. if we hope, then do we with Patience wait for it.* Comfortable it must needs be, because of the excellency of its object, Gods Promises; all the comfort of the Scriptures are the very ground of it, *Rom. 15. 4. That we thro patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope:* and it is therefore call'd *Coloss. 1. 23. The hope of the Gospel.* Whatsoever mercy is included in the whole Gospel, Remission of sins, and everlasting Blessedness, all those rich and precious mercies which that does propose, and which God himself thought to be the most tempting baits to allure us, even all these our Hope does fly at. You may find them every where scatter'd; the Resurrection from the dead *Acts 23. 6. I am accus'd of the hope and resurrection from the dead;* and *c. 28. 20. For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.* Secondly Eternal Life, *Tit. 1. 2. In hope of Eternal Life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Thirdly the Glory to come, *Rom. 5. 2. We rejoyce in hope of the Glory of God:* and *Col. 1. 27. it is call'd the Hope of Glory.* Yea the being like God himself in the Text, *We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him,* and then it follows, *and he that hath this hope purifieth himself as he is pure;* as also *Tit. 2. 13. That blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ.* All these the Christian does with joy and confidence expect *Heb. 3. 6.*

And here you may see the price of your calling, whatsoever good things God hath prepar'd for them that love him; and they are
ⁱ 1 Cor. 2. 9. such, ⁱ as neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither can enter into the heart of man to comprehend. Yea whatsoever good things he hath prepar'd for himself, his own glories, all these he hath set out to bait our hopes with; these are a Christians most assured expectations. Whosoever thou art, that art a careful Soul, and with strict Religion followest after Holiness, thou maist securely give the Scoffers of the world and the wicked leave to call thee miserable, to deride thy strictnesses and thy austerities, to say thy mortifications do make thy life sad and uncomfortable: alas! they do not see the
^k Heb 12. 2. Hope that is laid before thee, such a Hope as made thy Savior ^k endure the cross and despise the shame. They look upon thy strict performances, but they do not look upon thy expectations, they consider not the Crown of those performances: for if they did, they would not certainly think the present momentary pleasures of their sins could countervail that Crown. Be the hardship what it will, it is a comfortable Hope, and that sufficiently confirm'd to us; full of assurance it leans upon the whole Trinity, *1 Pet. 1. 21. That our hope might be in God.* and *Tim. 1. 1. Our Lord Jesus Christ our Hope.* *Rom. 5. 5. That we may abound in Hope thro the power of the Holy Ghost.* The Power of the whole God-head engag'd both to secure and to support our Hope. *A blessed Hope Tit. 2. 13. a Hope that is enjoyment.*

enjoyment. And if it be a blessed Hope, what will the possession be; if there be happiness in the expectation, what will there be in the fruition? O purify your selves and come and see: which brings me to the last part, how this Hope does set a man on purifying; for *every man that hath this Hope, purifies himself.*

Now to declare and prove this to you I shall do two things. First prove that this is such a Hope, as hath in it motive enough to set a man on purifying. Secondly that he that does not purify, cannot have this Hope.

1. This Hope hath certainly motive enough to set a man on purifying: had we laid the hopes of heaven near our hearts, were our thoughts but once set and bent upon the joys above, we would easily persuade our selves to set upon the mending of our selves. What will not hope do? All the employments of the world do but serve this passion; *They that plow, plow in hope*, saith *S^t Paul*, because the heavens promise them a season of harvest; tho they do frown in seed-time and storm against their labors with inundations of tempest, or freeze the earth into an untam'd hardness, till it become iron as their instruments, yet will they melt themselves or they will thaw those frosts, and toil as if they would vie drops with winter clouds, in showers of sweat as well as rain, merely because they hope to reap. And they that plow the sea are yet more slaves to Hope; for they out-face death with all its terrors for the hopes of a gainful venture, they do charge thro a shower, a deluge of waves that do assail them with foaming wrath, and sustain an inundation of billows that fall like Gods swelling cataracts, as if they came from heaven out against them, and are fearless when they are but an inch remov'd from an Abyss of ruin that gapes like hell; men of confidence, hard as those rocks which they despise for hopes of a little profit. And what shall we say to the poor Soldier, who for hopes of rags and roots will charge fire, whom the promise of, God knows, a thin salary will make to run into as great a storm and tempest of flame, as the Seaman does of water, even into a shower of death? The most active of our passions either submit to Hopes, or owe their violence to an activity deriv'd from them. Do not men bridle in all their desires, and the furies of their passions to the peevish will and liking, and become perfect compliance to the otherwise intolerable humors of one whom they hope to please, or from whom they hope for some inheritance or preferment? And the Tragedies of Ambition, which uleth to wade thro a sea of bloud and sin, that does scorn Relations, defy God and its own Conscience, reverse States, and confound all rather than miss its aim, are but the issues of a most uncertain Hope. And then, my Brethren, would not the Hopes of Heaven be able to do something with us, when the Hopes of a little know not whats, will do all this? Would we not *sow to the Spirit*, where the harvest is Blessedness? Would we not *war against the Flesh*, when he that overcomes should have a *Crown immortal and incorruptible*? Would we not comply with Christ and please him to get his inheritance, and have some ambition for the Throne of God, if we did but hope for these, as we do for the other? Yes my Brethren. I will give an example of one, who slighted all the most glorious satisfactions of

/ Exod. 5. 16.

the most swelling earthly hopes, and when he had every thing brought to him that ambition could gape for, yet threw off all upon these onely Hopes, *Hebr. 11. 24, 25, 26, &c.* When he was come to years, when he came to the age of understanding the honors of a Court, and when his appetite was grown ripe for the delights that do attend one, and he fit for the enjoyment of them, and the opportunity of them thrown into his hands by being taken in Son of the Crown, and so Possessor of all the advantages of pleasure which such a Relation can afford: and when on the other side there was nothing in the other scale, but the sorrows of a low vassalage, and the afflictions of a hard slavery; nothing but a brickiln to be set against the Palace, and instead of the rich variety of earthly entertainments not so much as ¹straw to make their brick of; that he should chuse the afflictions; and as if his will were not alone engag'd that way, but his understanding also led, that he should esteem that wanting, that contemptible condition, the *reproach of Religion to be greater riches than the treasures of Egypt*. And indeed the very reproach of Christ is greater riches, riches I shall carry with me to that great Tribunal at the dreadful day, that will be the great Kings Badge, his Livery upon me when I stand before his Throne, when all the spangles of your pomps shall be faln off and look as gantly to the wicked as their own sad carcasses or sadder expectations: as if there were more shine and splendor in the dirt, which scorn does throw into the face of Piety, than in the Pomps of Wealth. Now this must sure be from some strange consideration. Why all was upon this score, *he had respect to the recompence of the reward*, he hop'd for *better things*: what's the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter to the Son of God? or the succession to the Crown of *Egypt* in comparison with the possessing the Inheritance of Heaven? 'Tis true the treasures of that Crown may furnish me with the aims of all my appetites, what're my heart or what my lust can wish that will get me the opportunity of having, it will allow me all those pleasures which all the world gapes after, riches to procure for them; whatever curiosity, or emulation, or sin does long for, they will prostitute before me. But what are all those satisfactions in comparison with the joys of God? Is there delight in the full affluence of those enjoyments? Hath God indulg'd pleasure to those things which he hath allow'd to wicked *Egypt*? and shall I think he hath not provided greater pleasures for his own self, and for those he intends to make happy with him? Now let me have Gods delights, Heaven I do assure my self hath the more advantages, and therefore there I chuse. And so he chose rather the afflictions of this world, for he had an eye to the recompence of the reward; and by this we are sure, if we had hopes, we should make other choices than we do. If a sin come to tempt me drest with all its pleasures, and cloath'd with all the bewitching arts it can put on, or fancy paint it out with, if at the same time I can but look up to my Hopes, bethink my self of the rewards of Religion, and recollect that there are no such pleasures in the sin, as there are prepar'd for me, if I abstain from it, shall I not then reject and scorn the temptation, think it impertinent and foolish, and wonder it should be so unreasonable to

to desire, or think me so vain as to grant upon score of pleasure in the commission, when I am sure of greater if I do not commit it? Shall I not have reason to believe the sin very unkind to me, when it allures me with some little delight, and I must part with all blessedness for it? No surely nothing can withdraw him, whom a Christians Hopes do entertain. But because temptations are apt to prevail, where there is no appearance of danger, to come a little nearer to you, that you may with terror see that none can have this Hope but they that purify, which was the last thing, I shall onely ask thee, whosoever thou art that hopest to have thy sins forgiven thee and to have Eternal Life, upon what grounds thou hopest it? We have no reason to hope for any thing, but what God hath promis'd. Now hath God any where promis'd that thou particularly shalt be sav'd? Certainly no. What then? why dost thou hope? if thou canst, answer me. Because he hath promis'd to the *Pure in heart, that they shall see God*, he hath given assurance to them that *repent* that they shall be forgiven; and I how sinful soever I have bin, yet I am penitent, I endeavor to purge out that old leaven, to cleanse my self, I am resolv'd not to allow my self any of my vicious inclinations or my customes, I'll strive against my petty sins, and my soul is humbled in me, and therefore have I Hope. If thou canst answer thus, thou hast indeed good grounds, thou hast prov'd that thou maiest hope: but withal thou hast prov'd also that thou dost purify, and upon that score dost hope. For if thou didst not repent, and amend, and purge thy self from thy filthy wickednesses, thou must then know, that the same God that seal'd all his promises with the blood of his Son, did also represent and seal these threatnings in his suffering, *Without holiness no man shall see God.* ^m *Except ye repent ye shall all perish.* ⁿ *The axe is laid to the root of the tree; every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire.* ^o And, *Be not deceiv'd, neither fornicator, nor adulterer, nor covetous person, nor riotous, and the like, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ or God; For without are dogs, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie: and* ^q *They that live after the flesh shall die;* and Christ himself pronounc'd, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire.* Now if thou goest on in a course of any of these sins, dost any of these deeds of the Flesh, I shall onely ask thee, are not these threats as true, and as much to be believ'd as his promises? And if thou dost believe them, how is it possible that thou that liv'st in any of those courses which these threats belong to, canst have any hope? When God hath so solemnly declar'd thou shalt have nothing but everlasting ruin, how darest thou, how canst thou hope for Heaven? This is the same thing as to think to anchor on the billows, or to lay foundations in a wave and on a storm; to hope in threats at least in opposition to all Scripture and to all promise, to wage war with the Gospel, and resolve to have them both against, and in despite of God: and that certainly will very little avail thee. No he that does not amend cannot hope; for he that hopes must needs purify himself.

And now should we apply this to the careless Sinner, if we consider

1 Matt. 5. 8.

Luke 13. 3.

Matt. 3. 10.

1 Cor. 6.

9, 10.

Rev. 22. 15.

Rom. 8. 13.

Matt. 25. 41.

sider first not onely what sad character *S^t Paul* does give of men in that condition, how it is the description he gives of the Heathen, and he joins it with other most comfortless expressions, *Eph. 2. 12. without Christ, strangers from the Covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:* but also look upon the experience, how to be in a lost desperate condition in relation to so eternal a consequence as the world to come imports, is such a thing as none was ever able to stand under the consideration of it; one hours despair sinks them for ever: we could not bear the weight of it. *Judas* did chuse all the sad issues of it hereafter rather than the passion here, thought it easier to go meet Gods fury than despair of mercy; and when he saw he had no hopes of pardon, he ran to damnation. No we are resolv'd we must hope to be sav'd.

2. Consider that it is impossible for the wicked man, while he continues such, to hope: he cannot chuse but know that the promises concern him not, they are conditional, they are made onely to them that repent and believe, and God knows that he hath not don yet; so that nothing but the threats belong to him. And then how shall we reconcile these considerations, if we put them both together in the Sinners mind? How shall they be at peace and not tear one another and the soul? It is impossible to endure not to hope, and yet 'tis impossible that man should hope; and if this contest happen when he goes to die, then his own thoughts will drag him down to the Abyss with more violence than the fiends. - Sure 'tis a very sad consideration to think that men that know the wretchedness of being hopeless, that dare not not hope, will not yet industriously and piously set upon the performance of that condition on which they may hope, will not purify that they may have reason to expect the promises. And it is more sad to see that men, who never purge themselves from filthiness of Flesh or Spirit, but go on in their sinful courses, and consequently know, that while they are such they cannot hope, yet will in despite of that knowledge hope, and do notwithstanding all think to come to Heaven. Certainly while a man goes on to sin, to hope for mercy is presumption in him, and so another sin added to the rest; yea 'tis a disbelieving of Gods threatning, an affronting him in his veracity, an imputing falsehood to his menaces, and a putting himself almost out of the possibility of repenting. For he that do's hope for Salvation in the condition he is in, hath no temptation at all to change his condition, but is likely to go on confidently and hopefully to eternal perdition: it were a mercy to such a person to be struck into despair, that he may be taught the wretchedness of his condition and hurried out it, in which as long as he does hope, there's no reason to expect that he should leave it, but by becoming hopeless in it may be frighted from it, and the gates of hell is the onely probable means to let that man into the way of heaven. O the Christians Hope! it is the *hope of righteousness* Gal. 5. 5. Nothing else but holiness and righteousness can give a man ground for it. And certainly, my Brethren, it is such a Hope as would countervail the trouble and the pains of reforming our selves. What will not a man undertake, which he can but hope to go thro,
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and is assur'd of a large recompence for doing? and surely Heaven is worth the endeavouring after, and that blessed Hope worth purifying our selves for. For it was worth the death of the Son of God; Christ was content to be crucified to compass it, and cannot we be content to purify our selves for it? Will you see what hope can perswade a man to do? See *Abraham* to whom God promis'd onely the Land of *Canaan*, and that not to be enioied by himself nor by his Son, but onely by the Posterity of *Isaac* his Son, and his Promises were further off than Heaven; yet after that, before *Isaac* had any Posterity, when he was but a child, God ^f commands Gen. 22. 2. him to go and sacrifice his *Isaac*, and go to cut off all hopes of ever enjoying it, yet ^t *against hope he believed in hope*, saith *S^t Paul*, and ^t *he that had receiv'd the promises of God, offer'd up his onely begotten Son* Heb. 11. 17. i. e. having entertain'd and embrac'd the promise of a numerous seed and people that should spring from him, and having no other Son but this from whom they should spring, nor possibility in nature, nor promise above nature that he should have any more children, but a plain ^u affirmation that this People, to ^u whom the Promises belong'd, should come from *Isaac*; yet having Gen. 22: 17, 18. once truly hop'd that God would perform his promise, he absolutely obaid that command of Gods resolving to kill the Son, on whom all those Promises depended. And now my Brethren, there is no such puzles in our Hope, nor no such hard thing requir'd of us, no Sons to be sacrific'd but onely a few vices, no doubtful perplex promise of a *Canaan* onely, but plain assured Heaven: and then had we but the least degree of his hope, as we have infinitely greater reason, how would we sacrifice any thing to Christs command? how would we offer up a lust, and think a sin a good exchange for the hopes of Heaven? and he that had *this hope*, would certainly *purify himself as he is pure*.

It is but now the Church hath celebrated the Ascension of our Lord Christ, and the great Proposal of the Angels *Acts* 1. 11. to all those Disciples that beheld him going up to Heaven and gaz'd after him so wishly, was that *they should see him come again*. Now the particular comfort of that coming so again is, *when he shall appear, we shall be like him* *1 John* 3. 2. and the hopes of being so *S^t John* thought a sufficient motive to set every man on purifying, and that himself: for this lustration cannot be perform'd by Proxy, and be remitted to another; for even our Saviors Righteousness will not be imputed unto those, who will have none besides; he redeems and saves none but them whom he has sav'd from their sins.

Reveal, O Blessed God, some of thy Glory which thou hast prepar'd for them that love thee, some of that blessed Hope of a Christian calling to our hearts, that it may stir our desires and longings, and heat them into hopes; and that we having the hopes of seeing thee, may purify, and may escape that day of fire, which shall melt the Heavens, and purge those glorious bodies which are not pure in thy sight. Behold, O God, we tremble with horror of thy dreadful Judgment. The Angels are not clean in thy sight, and the Seraphims cover their faces, what then shall become of us vile filthy Sinners, whose daily impurities have so defil'd both our souls and

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bodies,

bodies, that we are but one mass and heap of uncleanness. Blessed God, we know that as long as we continue such, we cannot hope to see thee in mercy; we know that if we *repent not*, we *shall all perish*; we know that if we *live after the Flesh*, we *shall die eternally*; we know that *neither fornicators, &c. shall have any inheritance*. O let this knowledg apply it self to our hearts and consciences, that the terrors of it may fright us from the vain hopes that we do cherish of being happy, notwithstanding we go on in our sinful courses, for alas those hopes will perish with us; and that those terrors may so work on us to set upon amendment. Cleanse and wash, we pray thee, all our impurities in the blood of thy Son; bury them in his grave, never to rise hereafter, and melt our hearts into repentant tears, that so our hearts may become purer. O thou that didst cleanse us with thy blood, baptize us with thy *Holy Spirit and with fire*, that it may purge out our dross and filthiness, and be an earnest to us of that glorious Purity, which we shall have in Heaven, seeing thee as thou art, and becoming like thee, where we shall sin no more, but for ever serve and praise thee.

SER-

S E R M O N

VIII.

OF THE HIDING PLACE

From Indignation.

Isaiah 26. 20.

Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thy self as it were for a little moment, until the Indignation be overpast.



UPON the Eve as it were and the Vigils to the day of Indignation, when we cannot but look upon it as ready to be pour'd out on us in a full stream, when we see destruction make close approaches to us, work round about us, and punishment like our sin lies at the very door, ready either to enter in upon us, or seize us if we offer to come out; to offer at a way to prevent all this, that should discover to you a safe retreat from those threats that pursue this Nation in general, open a shelter from the present storm, cannot chuse but be seasonable; yet such a thing the Text do's venture at, and if God himself knew the best way to keep off his Indignation from us, then here it is; for he prescribes, *Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thy self as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.*

Before I do divide the Text, I shall tell you in what sense I interpret those words, *Enter thou into thy chamber and shut the doors about thee*, which if it be not according to the immediat and literal importance of them, is yet such as is justified by a parallel place of Scripture dictated by our Savior himself, and will afford us most wholesom observations. I take them in the sense they have *Matt. 6. 6.* *But thou, when thou praieſt, enter into thy chamber and shut thy door, so that here they will be the form of prescribing praier: in dangerous and sad times, when if thou ^a look unto the earth, thou shalt behold ^a nothing but trouble, and darkneſs, and dimneſs of anguiſh, why then lift up thine eyes to Heaven, go to thy Praiers; in times of change when thou knoweſt not which way to betake thy self, go to the Cloſet of thy devotions, take off thy thoughts from these sad objects here below, and fix them on the comforts of Religion, divert thy thoughts from the occasions of discontent, and employ them in meditations upon God, in converſes with him, in contemplations*

Isaiah 8. 22.

of his Promises and joys; in one word spend thy time in Praiers and Devotions.

That's the sense; the parts are 1. A perswading invitation, *come my people*; wherein are the persons invited, *my people*, secondly the invitation, *come*.

2. Here is that they are invited to, set down by way of counsel, and that hath several branches.

1. *Enter thou into thy chambers.*

2. *Shut thy doors about thee.*

3. *Hide thy self*, with the duration of it *as it were for a little moment*; and secondly the end of this and all the rest, that the Indignation may pass over them; *until the Indignation be overpast*.

In the handling of them I shall take this course, first from the first general I shall speak somewhat of the persons invited, that have this compellation *my people*, and giving you some reasons of it.

From the second I shall observe that in times of storm or any sadness the onely way to withdraw our selves from the violences of discontents and troubles, is to retire to praiers, and the onely comfort then is in the Closet-exercises of Devotion.

3. From the next part, *hide thy self*, that Praiers are in sad daies the onely great security, and the devotion-chamber a sure hiding place from Indignation.

4. From the duration, that the sorrows of the afflictions, which God does suffer to fall upon his own devout People, they last but *for a little moment*.

5. From the last there is none of Gods Indignation in them, all that overpasses them.

First of the compellation my People, *come my People*. Now God may speak to those here for two reasons; first to shew us that in the times of storm and of the breakings out of indignation God invites none to courses of security, puts none upon ways of safety, do's not take care of any but those that are his People, and those in whom his People are concern'd, as Kings, who are the nursing Fathers of his Church; as for others let them take their own courses, look to themselves, but come ye, *come my People*. *My People* is a word that includes relation, and wherein it do's consist you will find from the correlative set together with it in the very making of the Covenant, ^b *I will be their God, and they shall be my People*; they who take God to be their Lord, and assume to become his obedient liege People, such have indeed a right and title to his Protections: to provide for and take care of them it is his office, he undertook it in his Covenant, and not to do it were to renounce his compact, which he bound himself to with an Oath, which 'tis impossible for him to do. But as for others, they have no plea to these. Can Rebels claim protection, and such who renounce relations, that put themselves off from being his People, expect that he should look after and take care of them, be their Guardian and Security? The different condition of these two sorts of People in relation to Gods caring for them in time of judgment you will find *Mal* 3. 16, 17, 18. In the times of undisturb'd abundance and of full prosperity, when the God of this World is good to them that serve him, when the Lord

^b Jer. 31. 33.

lets men alone, and the ungodly thrive, then indeed his protections are not much regarded, but wickedness & wealth seem the strongest security: but when God sends his Indignation abroad, and when his Judgments sweep away those confidences, then this will be a comfortable consideration, come what will come I have one that hath writ me in his note-book, in his *Book of Remembrance*, to put him in mind that he is to provide for me: and when the most flourishing ungodly shall be stript of all his hopes and trusts, no least relief from them, nor can he look for any from the Lord, God hath not so much as directions for him here, he hath no part, not in his persuasions, is not invited to his Counsels; then have I one that will make me up amongst his Jewels, have the same cares of me as of his peculiar precious treasures, and calls me to security, *Come my People*.

Or secondly *my People*, to let us see what arts of invitation God does use to persuade us to take good counsel; he gives us all the compellations of kindness, and speaks us as fair as possibly, not to do him a courtesy but to be kind to our selves. In other places, when he hath no design upon them, then he cries to *Moses, thou and thy People* Exod. 32. 7. but when he would do good unto us, when he would entice us to be safe, then *come my People*. So he does elsewhere use all the titles of love, and cloths his invitations with the wordings of our most known Courtships, that that which useth to prevail with us, may do his work upon us. So in the *Canticles* 5. 2. *Open to me my love, my dove, my spouse, my undefiled*; and the whole book is but the Arts of Divine wooing. Strange that the heavenly Bridegroom must court so much to be receiv'd by his Spouse! Good God! that thou must be forc'd to give us good words to prevail with us to be good unto our selves, that we must be sooth'd, tempted, and flatter'd into preservations and mercies, that we should refuse remedy and Antidote unless it be guilded; that to lie hid in times of Judgment, and to escape Indignation is not motive enough to us, but we must be woo'd to do so: safety it self must speak us fair or we will none of it, and God must flatter us into the places of security, *Come my People, enter into thy chambers*, the next.

Enter thou into thy chambers. Whence we did observe, that in times of storm and calamity the onely way to withdraw our selves from the violences of discontents and troubles, is to retire to Praiers and Closet exercises of Devotion. If I should go to prove this, I might read you the whole book of *Psalms*, the Psalter being but *David's* Liturgy in time of sadness, the service and the refreshments of his sorrows. To tell you that he says, *In my trouble I will go call upon the Lord* Psal. 18. 6. and *when I was in trouble I called upon the Lord* Psal. 120. 1. or again, *for the love that I bear unto them they take now my contrary part, but I give my self unto praier* Psal. 109. 4. this would be to no purpose, for the whole book is but doing this. And indeed to do it, is the best counsel God himself do's give, 'tis that he do's invite us to in such a discourse, *come my people, enter*.

And for the comforts of it, I shall enclose them in the application, which shall pass by that strange mistake that is in some men, who seek to quench the sorrows of calamity by the entertainments of

fin, to divert sad thoughts by vicious company, to refresh themselves with the jollities of iniquity, to choak the remembrance of their afflictions with riot, and drown it in excesses. Alas, 'tis not go abroad unto the open lodgings of intemperance and to the Inns of pleasure, but *come and enter thou into thy chambers.*

And secondly it shall omit that very near as great mistake of them, who in times of impending calamity busy themselves with the cares of the world, whose hearts are then especially set on thriving, and they immerse themselves in the wayes of gain, looking on that as the thing that is to be their great security, and that they shall provide against all sad events by that. Strange! that in the time of pungent troubles, when they are encompassed with misery, to run into the thorns and briars, as our Savior calls them, should be our onely hopeful refuge and retiring place, that men should be then most griping after that, the cares of keeping which, and the fears of loosing it are the onely great things that make calamity grievous. He, who then makes himself Master of possessions, gives pledges to Affliction. Shall I then put my self further out into the world, when Gods discretion bids me *enter thou into thy chambers.*

But thirdly I apply directly to the calamitous, however destitute and unhappy. When thou art brought at once low enough for pity, but so unhappy as to be scorn'd, ruin'd, and contemn'd too, come here, and pour out thy soul into the bosom of him, who thou art sure will not refuse thee, nor turn away his face from thee, but stands here to invite thee with all the compellations of love. Here thou mayst lay open thy case to him that had so much kindness to thee as to die for thee, and mingle thy own tears with the blood of God that was shed for thee. To have any friend whom to impart thy griefs to, is in good measure to unlade and emty thy self of them: thou hast here the most faithful bosom of thy Savior, whom thou mayst behold in the same postures of affliction that thou thy self art in, out of affection to thee and suffering for thee, in Agonies of one and the other, sweating as much with heats of love to thee as of pain for thee, hanging down his head upon the cross with languishments of kindness and of weakness, and his arms stretch'd into the posture of receiving thee to his embraces, and his side open'd, not onely to shed blood and water for thee, but to receive thy tears and give thee passage to his very heart. Come then my People, come to me; if thy sad expectations be like plummets at thy heart and weigh it down, yet lift up thy heart together with thy hands in assur'd confidence that that kindness, which did thus express it self, will never fail thee. If notwithstanding this, the pressure make thy thoughts to sink and thy soul to grovel, let it be but a bowing down in submission to my will, who certainly know what is best for thee: come then and give thy self up into my hands, as into the hands of a faithful Redeemer. Now the devout soul doing so, by often betaking himself to God upon these occasions, becomes acquainted with his Maker, and in all discontents he will strait run to his Acquaintance there to disburden himself; and in all fears thither he hasts for shelter with the very same complacencies that our Savior says the young one does to the wings of the hen at the approach

approach of danger: there the soul nestles, and is hugely pleas'd with the apprehensions of its comfortable warm security. By frequent converses of this kind and other practices of Devotion, and Meditations on the mercies of his providence and his protecting kindneses, besides the glories of his Preparations towards his future Estate, the soul mounts up to great degrees of confidence and familiarity with God: and God does use, when a heart does thus ply and follow him and become intimate with him, to reveal himself also to that heart in the midst of his devotions; when he is conversing with the Lord, he will breathe into him the inspirations of Heaven, and with soft whispers speak peace close to his heart, break in upon him with flashes of joy, warm him with gleams of comfort which ravish the soul with delight in the employment. Hence grow strange intercourses betwixt them, the Lord pours in of his Holy Spirit, that bond and ligament of God and the soul, that maintains perpetual commerce between them; they do nothing but close and mingle as it were, till the heart mount up to those extasies that we read of in devout persons, that entertain themselves to miracle in the enjoyment of those Contemplations, which these exercises do afford them. The heart then melts no longer in the tears and sorrows of affliction, but with the dissolvings of love; when thro excess of complacency in God and in his joys, the soul hath a kind of impotency of Spirit, so as it cannot contain it self within it self, but as a liquid thing hath its overflowings, and is poured out into the bosom of the beloved, and by an outgoing fairs from it self into an union with the Object of its affections. And the Soul that by the practices of Devotion is brought to be thus affected, hath not only fulfill'd the counsel of the Text, retir'd into his chambers, but is also brought into Gods chambers, so the Spouse in the *Canticles* expresses c. 1. 4. *The King hath brought me into his chambers*, and c. 2. 4. *He brought me into his banquetting house, and his banner over me was love*; and in c. 3. 10. she describ'd the bed-chamber whether she was brought, *the midst whereof was pav'd with love*: and all this means but the entertainments of devout Contemplations. And Christ in the Parable concerning importunate continuance in Praiers saith it ^c opens the bed-chamber door and gets in thither. And then, my Brethren, what need I be troubled how the world does go abroad, when I am entertain'd in Gods banquetting house, and in his bed-chamber? It were easy for me to produce instances of them that were so taken up with the joys of Devotion, that they had scarce any thoughts for any thing besides, they even forgot that which was most necessary to their being, it made all other passions to languish, they had no appetites for other things, at least there was no vigour in those appetites, onely decayed desires from which the soul was quite retir'd, and minded nothing but the Object of their Praiers, being as it were in trance and swoons of Devotion. Neither is this any strange thing or without reason, that the Soul that loves should be so employ'd about and bent upon the Object of those desires, as to neglect all other of its offices, so impetuous in serving them that it abandons all its other business, attends no faculty but that which is engag'd upon that Object,

c Matt. 7. 8.

Object, does not so much as lend it self to any outward organ, feeds and advances onely that affection, but leaves the rest to decay and languish, and being destitute of soul to die. Just so, if the love of those Contemplations which Devotions afford take possession of the heart, it becomes heartless to all other functions, careless and languid to every thing besides; the Soul is so wholly bent upon the Object of those impatient desires, that it does not animate any other inclinations, they have no spirit in them, but are weak and faint, neither can they employ the heart so as to make him mind them: but just as the enamour'd person, that may be call'd and waken'd into some other business, but let his thoughts alone, and they run to his desires, there they unite and center. And to a Soul that is thus taken up, what's the world, or the miscarriages that are therein? Are there fears abroad? They do but make me then withdraw into my chamber, where there are all these joys. Does judgment threaten an utter desolation, make solitude about us, and drive us into ^d *the place of dragons*, in *David's* words? I will retire that way into Gods bed-chamber. Is the dimness of anguish, and darkness as of *the shadow of death* coming upon the Land? yet I am sure, that in the little Oratory there is the light of Gods Countenance. Does Calamity rife all, plunder the very bosom, breasts and bowels; the bosom of its dearest guest, the breasts of their dear burden, the bowels of their daily food, and rob necessity? Yea, but how stands my Praier-chamber? It is not quite so ill, if they have left me the food of immortality, the Body and Bloud of Christ; it cannot plunder me of my Devotions, and there is always blessed entertainment in Gods banquetting house.

^d Psalm 44. 19.

If these comforts do seem too subtil and too notional for any, tho this do happen merely by being unacquainted with the things that give them, and I have shew'd you the way how you may certainly arrive at them, of which this is the sum. The devout Soul receives in times of discontent not onely liberty, but invitation to go and bemoan his case to him that hath God-like compassions for him, so much love to him as to die for him, and to cast himself with confidence upon such a kindness, submitting to his all-wise, all-loving will. These submissions are secondly rewarded by him with the great contents of having Gods will don upon him, with the comforts of finding that it is indeed best for him. And sure I am there are that have experience, that never any sad thing happened to them, but they found that it was for the best. Thirdly the custom of this repairing to God, and giving themselves up to his guidance, begets a great acquaintance, an intimacy with the Lord; he reveals himself and his comforts to that soul: it do's enjoy strange refreshings from enlightnings, breathings, inspirations, evidences, and assurances, even tastes of promises and preparations. Lastly the contemplations of these, and familiarity with God begets transcendencies of love and joy, which when they are once entertain'd, their desires languish to all other things, they seem low and of base alloy, and consequently they take no content in them, being swallowed up by the other.

Yet let others lower souls take the comfort of this consideration; when

when things are so, that if they look into the world they can see nothing round about them but the prospect of trouble, and if they go on, besides the loss of all the opportunities of Religion, the labors of their whole life will but serve the ruins of an hour, that they have provided onely for spoil, heap't up for rapine, and gather'd but a prey; when the affliction of such an hours consideration shall have made them forget all their prosperity, so that in the whole compass of things they cannot find one occasion of comfort: why then those hours they have spent or shall go and lay out on devotion and the service of God, they shall be sure will turn to their account, both here as to the preservation of those opportunities and of their Church; for sure if God be likely to be mov'd to the continuance of them, 'tis to those that will make use of them, and 'tis for them, (for what should others do with them, that do not value them nor use them?) and will also turn to their account hereafter. That Praiers and those other exercises go up for a memorial to God, as the Angel told devout *Cornelius*, and prepare them mansions there, when they shall be divested of all other habitations, and that with *Mary* here is the better part that cannot be taken from them, that when their Riches have forsaken them, taken the adverse party, and gon to their enemies, these will stick by them, go along with them even up to Gods Tribunal, and take their part at the day of Judgment, when nothing dares appear for them but Christ and Piety. Oh my Brethren, when you or I have spent one hearty hour in humble zealous devotions, the hopes of the issues of that hour, the confidence that God hath heard your and my Praiers, and do's accept this our service, and will eternally reward it, if we continue thus, tho we be not able to raise our selves up to those heights of joy and love and complacency before recited, yet those lower hopes and confidences have more comfort in them than all the hours of pleasure in my life; for what have I of that, when the frolick's over. I may as well look for the footsteps of an impression on the water whose gliding streams instantly smooth themselves, or search for the tracks of birds in the yeilding air that shuts and closes up it self in a little moment, as seek for reliëts of joy after the pleasure is past: alas the delight did vanish with the laughter, and the comfort died as soon as the smile, the very memorial of them is perisht, and there is nothing of them left alive, but that now all is don, I am never the better for them. But the comforts of my devouter hours shall never die, but when I go to die my self, will be like life and immortality to me. O the strange acquiescencies of soul in the Consideration! the few hours that a man hath spent piously, how they will calm death, assist in agonies, and releive from pains! how such a Soul anticipates his Heaven! The truth is, to such an one death is welcom, and life, tho it have on it *the shadow of death*, is full of comfort. For when all the world about is *Egypt*, a devout man, tho he have but his chamber to retire to, and his doors be shut upon him, he lives in *Goshen*; when the consuming fire did run upon the ground throughout the land, there was no storm in *Goshen* *Exod. 9. 26.* and when flashes of judgment do burst in upon other persons, 'tis calm in the Praier-room.

When the destroying Angel had overrun every house in *Egypt* with death, when there was nothing but carcases and crying in each dwelling, there was not one sick in *Goshen* *Exod.* 12. 30. When a thick darkness dwelt upon the Nation, the *Israelites* had lights in all their dwellings *Exod.* 10. 23. and when a sad dark cloud does sit upon Gods Countenance and pour down inundations of tempest on a people, yet then his face does shine in the Closets of devotion, there he breaks in and does reveal his comforts; God is so there, as his Angel was at that time, a Pillar of light to them, and of cloud to those others, *Exod.* 14. 20. and when in this their pilgrimage he takes off their chariot-wheels, *v.* 25. that they drive heavily, prest with the weight of afflictions and the heavier incumbrances of the World, striving against the tide and torrent of troubles, encountering nothing but rubs and crosses, and having on no wheels, none of Gods comforts to bear them up, they march heavily till at last the waters overwhelm them: when as to those others the waters were a wall on the right hand and on the left; and to the devout persons the troubles of their times, by making them retire into their chambers, prove an occasion of security, which brings on the next observation from the words, *hide thy self.*

Whence we draw, that Praiers and the exercises of Piety are in sad days the onely great security, and the Devotion-chamber a sure hiding place from trouble. And indeed where else should we take shelter, but in our Sanctuary? Where should we seek for refuge, but at the horns of the Altar, where we offer up the incense of our Praiers, and the lifting up of our hands is as the evening Sacrifice? I have told you to retire thus into your chambers is to enter Gods bed-chamber, and where is safety to be had, if it be not there? Is there not full quietness and calm in the Lords withdrawing rooms? Not to tell you that *David* plac't his Rock, his Fortrefs, his Castle, his every word of safety upon this foundation: not to reckon up an infinity of places besides *Psalms* 27. 5. and 61. 2, 3, 4, 5. I shall onely say, that 'tis impossible for any Sermon to say better what I have to say for him that betakes himself to these secret rooms and nestles there, nor more pertinent to a time of sickness and distress, than the 91. *Psalms* hath spoke *v.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, &c. and to which 'twere vanity, if not Tautology to add. Should I labour to evince this further, I could prove strangely to you, that good hearty devout Praiers are in time of danger a Security even to a Miracle. Security from the fury of men, when single Prayers did resist an Army, when *Moses's* hand lifted up in his devotions slew more *Amalekites* than the armed hands of *Joshua* and all his Regiments stretcht out; for when *Moses* lifted up his hand, then *Israel* prevailed *Exod.* 17. 11. Security against the storm of Gods assault; for a Praier of *Moses* is call'd a standing in the breach against the Lord, when he came to destroy the People by a plague, *Psalms* 106. 23. so God said he would destroy them, had not *Moses* his chosen stood before him in the breach to turn away his wrathful indignation, least he should destroy them. They are terms of war, and do express the desperate act of Valour which war hath occasion for; when wall and rampart could not resist the storm of shot, but the Assault

Assault made its way thro stones and bulwarks, then must courage become the Rampart, maintain the breach, and repulse the Assailants. This is the danger and the glory of Valour, and this very expression do's Scripture make use of to declare the force and courage of a zealous Praier. When Gods indignation had storm'd the People, when it had made a gap, a breach to enter and overrun them in a moment, and the Angel with his sword drawn was assailing, had began his deaths, in steps *Moses*, arm'd but with single Praier maintains the breach, and turns away the Indignation. Neither was this all, for it did not onely beat off his fury, but assail'd him also, as it were took God captive, and held him that he could not fall upon them. For in the 32. *Exod.* 9, 10. he cries to *Moses*, *it is a stiff-necked people, now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them in a moment*: let me alone Hebr. *לִי-יָדָהּ* *dimitte me*, *ἐὰν μὴ ἔγωγε* *ut invaleſcat*, Syr. *Et nunc si permiseris mihi, invaleſcet*, Arab. *dimitte deprecationem tuam à facie mea*, Chald. Loose me, and let me go, suffer me, let me alone that I may destroy them; do not pray to me, thy strong desires are as bonds and cords upon me, loose me, and do not hold me: I can do nothing if thou pray, my arm of power, my stretcht out arm is held in, it is restrain'd by thy strong cries, thy violent sighs they cool my wrath that it cannot wax hot against them, thy zeal it is irresistible; do not therefore make use of it, do not hinder me, do not pray now, let me alone, *and I will make of thee a greater Nation*; I will bribe thee to silence, because my fury will not withstand thy Praiers; if thou maintain the breach, I shall not take this People now by storm: be hir'd then to withdraw, *let me alone*. But *Moses* he would take no bribes from God, but he besought the Lord his God, as it follows there, and the sudden effect of his Praier was, *the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people*. Here's the power of a fervent Praier, it hath a kind of force on the Almighty, a force that he does seem as it were afraid of, & would have prevented; and so does often, warning his Ministers the Prophets, *Pray not for this people*, I will not have you pray least you should prevail upon mine indignation and overcome my anger. And see then if you can find out such another security; many defences may be made which will hold out against the fury of men and their arm'd indignation, but notwithstanding those defenses they lie open still to Heaven, no walls or bulwarks to be made against that; upwards they are all gap and breach, and God may storm them where they have no works. If we be strong enough to keep out all our foes, we are not fortified to keep out plagues, have no guard against Gods hand, his arrows fly over any defences. But behold here defences against his Indignation, a line which he cannot enter; Praiers will keep him off, and in the chamber of thy devotions thou maieſt hide thy self from the storms of Heaven: when God turn'd Engineer, this was the direction he gave to keep out himself, *Come my people enter into thy chamber, and shut thy doors about thee, hide thy self*.

I shall not stay to give you the qualifications of the Praiers that are likely to prevail, how first *S^t James* saith *we must ask in faith no-
thing* James 1 6.

thing doubting, not wavering in our purposes, praying for what we esteem the truth, but not resolv'd if things should otherwise succeed whether we should not comply with them; and how secondly when we are to pray we must be such, as God hath not resolv'd against, and so he will not hear us: but now returning to my subject.

Now briefly to apply this, and here I will not say this Counsel was indeed intended for days of persecution, & that not so much in regard of the malady, as in the nature of the prescription, when he that will go to his prayers must indeed enter into his chambers, and hide his devotions too as well as himself; if thou desirest at such a season to secure thy self, enter into thy Closet, being not permitted to go into the Church: but this I will say, that even then when the Altar is no Refuge, and the Temple wants a Sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies an Asylum, even then the Closet will give shelter. Devotions are a kind of Omnipotent Securities, they are shields against the arrows of the Almighty: if for want of prayers to make up the breach it come to pass that a people is destroy'd, and God saith 'tis for that as much as for the demerits of their guilt *Ezek. 22. 29, 30, 31. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy; yea they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully, and I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land that I should not destroy it, but I found none: therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath, their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God:* if the performances of it be a making good the gap against his wrath, methinks it should a little move us in all our exigencies to stand upon our guard, to know our own strengths, and not lazily to suffer our selves to perish, when we may contend and strive with God to save our selves. Or if the line of destruction be stretcht out upon our Nation, if it have filled up the measure to the height, that God have sworn tho *Noah, Daniel, and Job* were among his people, yet should they save but their own lives, that is, their Prayers should not prevail with him for an impunity unto the land: however if we our selves desire in that great spreading ruin yet to escape, to lurk so that the Angel of destruction may not find us out; here is a place of Gods own choice to hide thee in. His fury will not search there for thee to destroy thee, where his own self did bid thee to retire for safety. He that commanded thee to enter into thy chambers, did not mean to come there to seek thee out to ruin thee; he that bid thee shut thy doors, intended that the indignation should not call in, but should pass by thee, which the Text do's tacitly promise in the last words, *until the indignation be overpast.* Some of the storm may fall upon a devout man notwithstanding all his careful Prayers, but there's no anger nor no fury in that storm; that he reserveth for the wicked, those who do take no care for the averting of his wrath, but resolve to enjoy their pleasures and their sins, till indignation overtake them, and sweep them and their delights away at once. To these indeed every affliction is vengeance and judgment, and their fiery trials here are but tastes
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and prelusions of Gods fearful wrath and fiery indignation; but to the careful devout souls they are but the strokes of love, chastisements of a father, there is no indignation in them; *I will take her* ^{f Hosea 2. 14.} *into the wilderness*, saith God by the Prophet *Hosea*, and *I will speak comfortably unto her*, אֶכְבֵּר עַל לֵב, I will speak unto her heart, in those desolate lonely places I will wooe her, and those dark solitudes of affliction shall be my opportunities of courtship, *I will take her into the wilderness*, and *speak unto her heart*, and *give her the valley of Achor*, the vale of trouble, *for a door of hope*. 'Tis not his indignation this to them, but his way of love, his way of making jointures; he puts them in the *vale of Achor*: or if vengeance be gon out against the people, yet devotion in the chamber is like ^{g Exod. 12. 13.} *bloud* upon the *Israelites* door posts; the indignation does go by it, makes a *Passover*, it enters into the houses of the *Egyptians* onely, but when it finds thy doors thus shut יַעֲבֹר וְעָם, the indignation does overpass, especially if it find such a *sanctification* as the bloud of Christ. The Angel of destruction could not enter the doors, where but the type of it was dasht upon the door, the Paschal bloud; how then will he fly the truth, the bloud of Christ our Passover? *Come then my people, enter &c.*

SER-

S E R M O N

IX.

OF THE REST TO BE OBTAIN'D

By them that labor and are heavy laden.

Matth. 11. 28.

*Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and
I will give you rest.*



W H E R E there no other difference betwixt Law and Gospel than what these words hold out unto us, yet had we abundant reason to rejoice and glory in our condition, who are invited to the news of Gospel-revelations. The way that God revealed himself by Law was by lightnings and thunders on Mount *Sinai*, the Pomp of it was a Mountain not to be come near unto, that burnt with tempests of fire, things that were not onely mazes but omens, that typified those storms and tempests that were to be the portion of transgressors, that limn'd out that unquenchable brimstone, and denounced that dire thunder of *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire*, which is the sentence of the Law in its own rigour. Yea and besides that blackness and darkness too, so that notwithstanding all those lightnings and those revelations God was still in the thick cloud and in the dark, and Christ might well say in the verse before the Text, *No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*; and when he comes to do that, he does it in another strain, with words of another nature, all invitation, *Come unto me all ye that labor*. The strain of Gospel is not to thunder us into obedience, but *I beseech you Brethren by the tender mercies of God*; and tho there be laboring and burden in the words, yet those are the effects of Law, and there is ease and rest for that labor and those burdens in the words too, and to them it is the Gospel that invites us, and it is Christ that gives them; for it is he that saith, *Come unto me*.

These words the Church makes use of for her call unto the Sacrament of the Lords body, and certainly it is impossible that they should signify with greater Emphasis than upon that occasion, when he does bid you come to him, that is, to the communication of his body and his blood; for *the bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ*. You come to him not onely for the emty kindness of a visit there, but to partake of his body and his blood, all
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the redemptions, graces, mercies, which he purchased on the cross. If ever Christ do call with passion, it is sure when he pours out that blood for us and faith, *every one that thirsteth come, Come unto me all ye that labor.*

The words are an invitation of Christ, in which we may observe

1. The Persons invited, *All ye that labor and are heavy laden.*
2. The invitation it self, *Come unto me.*
3. The entertainment at this invitation, *Rest; I will give you rest.*

In the handling of these I shall shew, first who those persons invited are, who they are that are said here to *labor* and to be *heavy laden*.

2. What is meant by their invitation, *Come unto me.*
3. How those persons come to be qualified for this invitation, so as to be invited, and none other; how the laboring heavy laden persons are the only fit persons to come to Christ.
4. I shall touch the advantages those persons shall gain by coming. Of these, and

1. Who they are that are said to *labor* and be *heavy laden*. The words express extremity of burden and labor under it, and weariness by reason of that labor; they are translated, *fessi estis & bajulantes onera* Syr. *labore attriti & gravati onere* by the Arab. And indeed they signify pains such as to make us pant and blow עָנָה, yea thro weakness not be able to stand כָּשָׁה, so as that the joints are loosed רָחַק, and the very soul fails and faints, and we become as it were in the *shadow of death* חַיִּי: all this κοινωγίας signifies. Now this excess of pains may denote two things.

1. Either the sinner under that notion as a sinner; sins themselves being in Scripture express'd by words that signify labor, trouble and weight, and therefore the word in the Text translates אָוֶן, which means all those, especially iniquity, *Mich. 2. 1. Wo to them that devise iniquity*, λογίζονται κόπους, that devise labors; and the very next words will warrant it, *and work evil*: it being a most familiar expression with the Prophet *David*, the Workers of Iniquity, not onely because it is some mens employment and trade, here lies their skill, their managery, they are not Artists in any thing besides; but the secrets of sin, the mysteries of filthiness, the Magisteries of Iniquity, these they are Professors of, in these chair-men: but also Workers of iniquity because it is their toil, they sweat under it, it is the vanity and vexation of their lives, which are rackt in designing, contriving, and acting the sins of their complexions and ambitions. Will you see our Saviors sense of the vexing painfulness of sin: he calls your sins of the least size, *peccata levia*, as they are esteem'd, moles in the eye *Matth. 7. 3. Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brothers eye?* that is, why dost thou look so severely on the light faults of others? Our escapes that we make flight of they are of such a nature in themselves, as to cause the anguish and fretting, that dust and splinters do in the tenderest part, the eye. And if our souls were not all corneous, our consciences fear'd and dead, we should with the same impatience bear them as our eye does dust, with restlessness work against it, never quiet till it force

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out tears to wash away the dust. Yea worse than that, for the word which we translate *mote* *χάρπυς* signifies a spill of wood, a little shiver or splinter, a thing absolutely insupportable to that part, which if suffered, does not onely threaten it with intolerable pains, but with absolute extinction. And truly every one of our slighter sins is *χάρπυς ἐν ὀφθαλμῷ* a shiver in the eye; and then the grosser iniquities will bear both the words of the text, of labor and burden, and are in the same verse by our Savior entituled to an expression that hath enough of both, even a beam in the eye: *And considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye*, that is, thine own vaster crimes. Every design'd and gross wickedness is *δοκός ἐν ὀφθαλμῷ*, a thing whose agony is as much beyond imagination as endurance. For how shall the eye bear that which the shoulders must sink under, which onely pillars can support? Yet such is that burden; and therefore the expression is frequent of bearing iniquities; ^a St Peter says it of Christ, *He himself bears our sins*, and the Prophet *Isaiah* said it before him c. 53. 11. *For he shall bear their iniquities* *יִסְבֵּן*, bear them as a great burden, as the word expresses, and as event did more express, a burden indeed which made the Son of God to sweat blood, and roar, and sink, and die. 'Tis true there are of those that do delight in life, onely because it is the opportunity of sin, it hath no more pleasure in it than is spent in vanity or iniquity, without that *κόπος*, that *φροντίς* life would be a burden, they would labor under it; all their other time is wearisome and perisheth, and notwithstanding in our Saviors character they are the onely drudges, yet in their own opinions they are the onely light hearted creatures, the onely persons whose life is but various ease and diversified pleasure. Yea and the onely great prejudice they have against Religion is, it makes men heavy, sad, and melancholly, hangs plummets upon the soul, plucks down the thoughts and countenance, and does that which no burden can effect in them; whom weights do but exalt, elevate, and in their own expression a load of sin and drink, that sinks their bodies to the earth, doth but heighten imagination and delight. Alas these men do no more discern the true labor of their own sins, than they do the ease and the refreshments of the pious souls. They see his fasts and abstinences, but they discern not how he feeds upon ^b *marrow and fatness*, as *David* saith, and finds all the words of their luxury in his religious performances, how he *tastes of the heavenly gift, and of the powers of the world to come*, Heb. 6. 4, 5. how he hath the antepasts of blessedness. These men do not consider that the pious mans weights are as the other bucket, which the heavier it is the faster it lifts that up that is against it: a burden theirs like that of wings, that does but poise their flight and help them up to Heaven, whereas their own lightness shall sink them into the deep of that pit that hath no bottom. 'Tis true indeed those very sins, that make our Savior stile the man a laborer, are in other places called *sleep*, as if they had the ease of rest, as if to him that were wearied with duties of calling or devotion, to take vicissitudes of sinning would be a soft refreshment and a pleasant reward, as if a little return of iniquity would restore him, as sleep doth the weary laborer. And how shall we reconcile these expressions? Shall we attribute

^a cap. 2. 24.

^b Psalm 63. 5.

attribute them to the unhappy contradictions of this thing sin; which is at once ease and pressure, sleep and yet heavy labour? or rather shall we gather hence the extremely toilsom condition of the sinner, whose very rest is *υπνος*, and whose refreshments tire, and are most wearisom? where shall he look for ease, whose ease is misery and anxiety. Tho his life be all sleep, yet he is all that while one of the *κοιμητες* here in the Text. And so those very wickednesses, which are here called heavy burden, are in other places called our own body, our selves. And what shall lighten him whose very self is weight? What shall disburden him who is his own immense pressure? Wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from these burdens of our selves? Burdens indeed with which the expressions seem to labor as well as the sinner, *κοιμητες* *υ*. We have not words for them, the mineries, the Gallies, the Mill, or dungeon are words of ease to the service of sin. No such slavery in the world as his that is bound to serve his lusts and passions; he must adventure thro all black designs and blacker hazards to attend ambition or to wreak ones malice or some hasty choler; adventure upon rottenness, embrace a Purgatory but to please an itch; must be the Martyr of his lust, run upon quarrels, qualms, head-ach, hazard, desperate misfortunes to quench not thirst, but a little custom. If you would see the labor that is in sin, behold your Savior in the Garden; it made the Son of God to sweat like clots of blood, it squeez'd that very person who was *נכר*, it made him faint, not able to stand under that tree on which he was to bear the Iniquity. At such hard rates man buyeth damnation, as if he envied himself ease in Ruin; *κοιμη* he doth extremely labor, till he faint, to get to Hell. Have you read in Scripture the pains and anguishes of a man posselt by a Devil, how it speaks of such a one that was intolerably vext and tormented, how the spirit rent and tore him, & often cast him into the agonies of death, & from it did revive him still onely to throw him back again into them? It were no hard matter to shew that the Scripture does express every gross Sinner to be one of these Demoniacs, to be possessed and inhabited by a Devil, *Matth. 12. 43, 44. When the unclean spirit is gon out of a man, he Walketh thro dry places; then he saith, I will return to my house from whence I came out, and he enters in, and dwells there.* And what doth all this mean, but describe a person that after seeming amendment returns back again to his courses of sin? Of such a one the Devil saith, *I will return.* A wicked person is the Devil's house, Sathan dwells there, and is not his house Hell? And then are not all the miseries of *Tophet*, the torments of the vale of *Hinnom* in a Sinner? Yea experience is fair enough for this, that the habitually wicked person is a Demoniac. Look upon the wrathful angry furious man, and you would think the man posselt were but his picture: his passion swels and tears him, he stares and foams, he cries out and is not so innocent as to say, *what have I to do with thee,* *c Mark 5. 7. Jesus, thou Son of God;* for he hath to do with him in blaspheming him with oaths and execrations, and his spirit rends not himself onely, but the wounds of that Holy one of God, and if his passion could speak plain, it would surely say his name also were *Legion.*

The debauched Drunkards they have the Epilepsies, the falling sicknesses, the dead Apoplexies of men possess, and there the Devil is again enter'd into swine. The lustful person may find also a spirit of uncleanness, and an unclean Devil in the Gospel. And thus our sins do treat us. And who then but wretched man would buy damnation at so hard rates? who would κοπιᾶν, extremely labor, tire himself till he faint to get to hell? as if he envied himself ease because he is to go down the hill thither, that he may think he has an easy descent, *facilis descensus*; he will therefore load himself with a most heavy burden to make his passage the more troublesome. Of what a profligated choice are we, that refuse Heaven with ease, and chuse Hell, tho we must labor hard to get it.

Or secondly, letting the *heavy laden* stand as they do, in the sense we have now given, we cannot excuse the Sinner from that expression there κοπιῶντες; those that labor may signify such as groan under the sense of that burden, such as labor to rid themselves of that weight, that pant and blow after a liberty and ease from that heavy pressure, under which they find themselves sinking into the horror of that deep, the very imaginations of which doth cause faintings of soul in them and Apoplexies of fear; that tire themselves to find out any way to escape from that eternal weight of torments that is prepared for them below, and the weight of indignation and vengeance that hangs over them above, and from that heavy burden, themselves, that sinks faster than either of the other, outvying God's threats with multiplied accumulated iniquities. The sweats of soul under the sense of the burden of sin, the labors of mortifying the flesh and crucifying the affections, of putting the body of sin to death, will justify this sense. The new Birth also hath its pangs, and the Child of God, as he is not engendred by weak purposes, faint resolutions, so neither is he brought forth in a sigh or wish of mercy, there is a labor in it. In this expression you may see the nature of repentance, the dawnings and first flashes of that Catholic Duty; 'tis not that easy thing to change my mind onely, and begin to believe. That that is not the best course I have hitherto trod in, the way of Sinners not the safest and most pleasant path, tho few of us will believe that: neither is it that easy wish, I would I had not don this act; for when the pleasure's gon and dead, the memory of it is so unsatisfying, if not loathsom, that a man can hardly not wish it. Nor yet is it that easy desire of mercy, that saying ^d Lord, Lord. The Penitent they are the κοπιῶντες; here they are such as even faint under a sense of the horror of their sins, whose hearts are broken and wounded with that heavy galling weight of them. If I should gather up the racks and tortures, the *Occultum quatiante animo tortore flagellum*, that self whip in the dark rooms and recesses of our thoughts, conscience dealing with us by the discipline of mad men, as knowing the sinner is not onely *Solomons* fool and *Dauids* man without understanding, but even *S' Pauls* ἀνέμους and ἀφρον mad-man, the *tacita sudant prae cordia culpa*, which a Heathen can reckon up to us. And add to these the Scripture expressions, the ὁδὸς, the pains of travel, the labor of a woman in child-birth, the agony of the Cross, and the pangs of death; the word

d Matt. 7. 21.

word repentance would bear them all, and they would let us see that the Penitent is truly one that labors under a very heavy burden, and so is invited here by our Savior, *Come*.

Thirdly those that *labor and are heavy laden* may signify such as groan under a burden of afflictions, and look upon them not as chastisements onely but inflictions, and are even wearied and affrighted by them. Thus those judgments which God did by his Prophets threaten to the Nations, are in those Prophets called the burden of those Nations; and the cross and calamities are often called *כבד*, the labor in the Text 1 Tim. 4. 10. and generally all the troubles and difficulties of this life, Rev. 14. 13. of which death is there made the rescue. And I need make no application of this interpretation, the words *labor and heavy laden* do in these daies sufficiently apply themselves; I shall onely tell you, that the whole sense of those words sum'd up make thus much, Those that are heavy burdened with sins, and the punishment of those sins, afflictions, and groan under the sense of both of them, laboring earnestly to be rid and be delivered from both, these are bid to come to Christ, which is the invitation, and what it means I am secondly to shew.

Come unto me. And first in general the word used *בוא* *Come* is not onely a word of exhortation, but of great encouragement also in the doing, so often used, *Come and let us kill him, and then the inheritance shall be ours*; and *בואו עִם רֵעֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל*, *Come ye unto the wedding*. ^e Matt. 21. 38. ^f Cap. 22. 4. And indeed such is needful to the persons here spoken to, the laboring, heavy laden: for them to take a journey, if there be not the encouragement of some great advantage, it will not sound like an invitation, but an infliction; and therefore our Savior besides the rest he promises, uses animating words even in the very call *בוא*. Therefore the whole invitation *come unto me*, tho it be used in the Gospel, and may very well signify come to me as to a Teacher and Instructor, so Nicodemus is said to come to Christ, and they are said to come to the light as that which was to reveal; yea and that place in Isaiah 55. 3. whither our Savior do's much reflect, when he useth this expression, seems to import but so, *Encline your ear and come unto me, hear &c.* yea and may so signify in this place, the words going before being *all things are given me of my father, and no man knoweth the father, but the son, and he to whom the son will reveal him*, it then follows *come to me*; as if he should say, therefore if you desire to be instructed in the way to life *come to me*, and tho you do labor under the load of many sins, yet I will shew you a way how you shall find ease and rest, and that way follows in the next verse, *take my yoke upon you and learn of me*, and ye shall be sure to find rest: this is very natural, yet because to give you rest is more than to shew you a way to it, and so may seem a promise and a reward very apporioned to the duty, *rest to coming*; therefore it is most probable that *come* doth not onely signify come to me to learn your duty, but that the *come* should be it self a duty, and so I shall consider it: and the expression *come to me* does in the Gospel signify a twofold duty.

1. It signifies to obey and serve. Thus very often most expressly in

in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* to come to God is to serve and worship him c. 11. 6. *For he that cometh to God must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him:* and c. 7. 25. *He is able to save them that come to God by him,* that serve God as he commandeth and enableth: c. 10. 1. *The sacrifices which they offered year by year could not make the comers thereunto perfect,* could not perfectly cleanse them that served God by them, *λατρίους*; and the 22^d verse there *Let us come with a true heart,* worship him with unfeigned piety and obedience. And the sense will be fully clear from the expressions that relate to it, *Seek the Lord, draw near to him,* and then *come to him.* To *seek him* is to enter upon such a course of life by which his favor is to be obtain'd, and what it is you will see *Isaiah* 55. where when he had bid them come to him, that they may do that he bids them, *seek him* v. 6, 7. *Seek the Lord while he may be found: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let them return unto the Lord.* Deut. 4. 29, 30. *But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thine heart and with all thy soul, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voyce.* Nor indeed can we seek God in any other path. The broad way, that goes down the hill, can never land us in God's Habitation, Heaven; and while we do go on in them it is not possible we should *draw near to God*, the second, which is but to go on in the same paths. And this expression is our own experience, it being the custom of those that are averse to one another to avoid the sight one of the other; but those that are friendly to seek each other, and delight in drawing near and in society. Thirdly then *to come to him* must needs be to proceed in those very ways wherein we sought him, till we are in his favor, and to walk with him is accordingly to please him: for so the LXX. renders *Enoch's* walking with God, and the Author of the *Hebrews* c. 11. v. 5. expresses that testimony which the Scripture gives of *Enoch*, that *he walked with God*, and which the Chaldee words *he walkt in the fear of God*, thus, *he received the testimony that he pleased God*; and that very walking is the same word with this coming *הלך* and *לך*, and here also made the same; for v. 6. of that chapter *Without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh must believe*, that is certainly; for he that pleaseth him must believe, or else it doth not prove. *To walk with God* therefore in his Laws, in his fear, and in his favor it is but the progress and the life of this very thing, we are here exhorted to come unto him.

Now if this be to come to God, and coming to him be the end of duty, thither we drive in our whole Pilgrimage of life and piety, to arrive at our Countrey, to come to our Fathers house, to walk with God, to enjoy his society is the very business and delight of Heaven. Why then this duty of conversion and obedience, this piety of life seems like its own reward, crowns it self. This coming is like that they say of the moving of the Heavens, which being in its own place, tho it be still in motion, is still *in termino*, every parcel of agitation is its own rest, and they have a most perfect acquiescency in that their turbination. And if to lead a good life be to walk with God, it is to be in heaven here; and piety is a translation upon earth.

But

But secondly there is yet another sense of the invitation *Come unto me*, and in that sense it is very often used by our Savior, even of believing in him *John 6. 35. I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* Where *he that cometh shall never hunger* is he that eateth this bread that giveth life, and *he that believeth shall never thirst* is he that drinketh, to let us see that eating him and drinking him, coming to him and believing on him are all the same. So in *v. 40. and 44. This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. So c. 7. 37, 38. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink: He that believes on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* So that to come to Christ is to believe in him, yet so as to obey him, and to frame our lives according to his precept and example. For to come to him doth comprehend the duty; we come to him to do, as also to believe in him must be to do that which we cannot but believe he requires. This is clear out of the forecited place, *I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger.* It is not coming to the bread that satisfies, for then would *Tantalus* no longer hunger or be thirsty, his hell would be his meal; but doing that which people that hunger and come to bread cannot but be supposed to do, even to eat. Why the same is to believe; for if coming to him and believing on him be the same, and coming to him signify not only that, but doing that which they that come cannot but be supposed to come to do, then to believe must be besides believing the doing that also which they cannot but believe they ought to do. So that *come to me* here is believe me, devote your selves to my obedience, and trust, and devote your selves on me.

And if this be to come to him, belief then is no longer expectation, but enjoyment; 'tis *ἡ ἀπολαύσις* in the highest sense, the giving us the very substance of those things which we believe we shall receive: it seems more than the evidence of things not seen, even the arrival at them and vision of them. 'Tis, saith the Wise Man, *ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος αὐτῶν* the beginning of our cleaving to him, of our being glued and fixed upon him, *Ecclesiasticus 25. 12.* And by faith we may both *tast and see how gracious the Lord is*, how *ἡ ἀπολαύσις*, the word following here, how sweet, how pleasant he is even to the eye and palate. If to believe be to arrive to eat and drink, Faith is now all sense, as verily as Christ is all enjoyment, all satisfaction, and happiness.

And to this happiness *they that labor and are heavy laden* are the only persons that are called; which is the third thing, to shew how this laboring and heavy lading come to be the qualification for this Invitation, how it come to pass that they that are such, are the only fit ones to come to Christ.

And first, in the first sense as all those words do but signify the grievous Sinner. These sins may in one sense given by Christ be a qualification to this coming, because ^h *the whole need not the Physician, but those that are sick.* Do not wounds require, and qualify for a Chirurgeon? The corrupt habitual Sinner is full of

wounds, and swellings, and putrified sores. Does not weariness and burdens dispose a man for ease and rest? The Sinner he is the tired laden man, he therefore hath the most need of this Invitation, which makes our Savior say, I came ⁱ to call Sinners; which is no more than saying, I came to say *Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden.*

And hence we learn the all-abundant kindness of our mercifull Savior: he needs no other motive for his helping of us, but our want of help: thou dost fulfill his own direction, when thou ^k makest a feast, invite not the rich, but the poor and needy. So here he makes the onely cause of his invitation of us Sinners, our necessity. Except he do invite us, we are miserable, must sink under a perpetual burden, and therefore he will call us to give us rest. *David* was well acquainted with this Attribute, and therefore praies, *Help me, O Lord, for I am weak.* Our want is argument enough to those bowels, whose business is to extend and diffuse themselves. Yea the Gospel expresses in that manner also; the Ruler there saith ^l *My daughter lies at the point of death, ἡ γὰρ ἐκθνήσκει, that thou maiest come and lay thy hands on her,* as if our wants were nothing else but his opportunities. Yea Christ himself hath taught us ground for this confidence, in the very Praier he hath taught us, ^{τὸ ἀπαιτῶν ἡμεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν,} *Give us our bread:* if it be ours, what need we go to beg and pray for it? Why our bread? Why certainly because we are in extreme need of it, we cannot live without it, therefore we go to pray for it; so that want is possession in Christ's esteem, and when we are in need then we may go to Christ and call it ours. He observes that himself here, when he makes our sinful misery the onely motive to his Invitation, *Come unto me all ye that labor.*

But then secondly in the second sense of the words those that are affected with the sense of their sins, that groan under and are humbled and brought low with the weight of their iniquities, that discern them to be truly heavy loads, and to be the true causes of faintings and languishing of Soul, these are the onely disposed persons to come to Christ in both the senses of that phrase of Coming. First as it signifies to turn from their evil ways and walk in those paths that lead to him. For as long as men apprehend no danger in their courses, how can we expect that they should leave them? While they onely tast the sweets and pleasures of sin, whilst the Devil smooths and strews their way, and makes one temptation receive another, and by the perpetuated vanity makes one sin a divertisement to another; so that none can clog, but each doth recreate, and one iniquity refresh him whom another hath wearied: how is it to be lookt for, that these men should quarrel with their pleasures, and forsake these delights and advantages of iniquity? Nay alas we see, when iniquity is become so cruel as to punish it self, and sin is its own Executioner, as adultery, drunkenness, covetousness and ambition oft are so just as to severely torture them that serve them, if notwithstanding that we see men chuse and embrace those sins that bring their Hell with them, are of such desperate appetites as to long for torments, how can we hope that any will forsake their sins before they find them toilsom burdens, before they begin to see

see them in their own deformed infernal shapes, to discern their hooks and prongs, their brimstone-flames and worm with which they will eternally torment us? They must be scar'd and mated, before ever they will forsake those things that flow with wanton delicacy and luxuriant delight; and therefore we see very few ever begin seriously to repent before their last death-beds, when *the evil day is come*, then that time is *in which thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them, when the keepers of the house shall tremble, i. e.* the hands shall shake with guilt or with infirmity, with palsy or with fear, thou wilt then hate their gripings, the bribery that they have bin the instruments of: how will men condemn their former excesses, their full riots, and their draughts that overflowed like seas, that had their tides and refluxes, *when the grinders shall cease, because they are few*, when the mouth is toothless, as unable to chew as the stomach is to digest meat; *and the pitcher shall be broken at the fountain, and the wheel at the cistern*, the bladder ceases to do his office, stopt up by stranguries or leaky with diabetes: punishments that old age, and living faster than nature design'd, bring along with it, very proportionate to that sin, if you understand it. Or how will they hate the foul inordinacies of unchast beds, *when the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail*, rupture and hernias and ulcers shall seize the lower ventricle. But these are all expressions that belong to that last day, and made use of by the wise Preacher, that had tried the vanity and emptiness, and the vexation and burden of them, to make us take up a little sooner, *Ecclesiastes 12.* the 6 first verses. And *when those that look out of the windows shall be darkened*, when the curtains of thy bed and of thy eyes shall be drawn, and that utter darkness begin to represent it self with which our Savior paints the lower region, when Hell from below is removed at his approach opening her mouth wide to swallow him, whom the vast weight of his iniquity is ready to sink into it; O then his sin is his greatest sickness, and his horror doth more disjoint him than death it self. O for a little life-time now to spend in piety, which before he counted the most unpleasant impertinency that could be, nor could be rectified till these apprehensions, which onely sense will work in most too late, be wrought in him, there being no other way to make us leave and come, but by looking upon death in the iniquity, which certainly is there, that having bin a murderer from the beginning. In the second sense as to come to Christ signifies to rest and devolve our selves upon him, this laboring is a necessary preparative, it is the sense of our misery without him that must drive us to him: the weight of that Legal curse that lies upon us all that must make us run to him, that was ^m *made a curse for us*. Who would either value or fly to a Savior, ^m Gal. 3. 13. that is not first convinc'd that he wants help? Can you perswade the mad man in the fever to betake himself to the Physician? He thinks you have more need, that counsel him. It is the drowning man that clings and grasps, and when he sees himself ready to perish, rather than want something to catch hold of, his roming hand do's even catch that water that do's strangle him, and he do's grasp his own ruin. Any rest to a falling man: and we never truly
and

and seriously can depend upon Christ, till we thus apprehend our selves sinking, and find our selves tired and fainting under the load of our iniquities.

No nor secondly on Christ's part, will he receive any that are not thus qualified. For will he, think you, forgive the sins of those that do as yet love those sins? or will he strive to ease them of their iniquities, that find no burden in them, but rather that of a full pleasure? No surely he will not envy them so much their delights, but let them enjoy their beloved ruin. Is it fit Christ should invite those men who do yet cherish those sins that slew him, or that he should receive into his bosom those iniquities that put him to death? No certainly, till we can hate those sins which he could die for, and till we find weight in those iniquities which he found death from, till we labor under that which he sunk under, we have no regard of his mercies to us, but renounce all relation to him, and close with his mortal enemy, and cannot then hope to be received by him. And thus you have the reason why these *καταρτισμένοι* *καταρτισμένοι* are the onely fit persons to be invited by him, because till we are so, we cannot truly come unto him, depend upon him; and till we are so, we are not fit to be received by him.

And now for application. But what? cannot we truly come till we find our selves to be *heavy laden*, till we *labor* and are tired and wearied with iniquity? We see the perverse conditions of man, whom nothing but misery can perswade to Heaven; Heaven is no bait, tho it prostitute all its glories; Happiness is a word that hath no musick in it; the pleasures with which God entertained himself from all eternity, have no temptation in them compared to those of sin: *Come unto me* is not an invitation till we labor; till we find our selves perishing in our choice, ruined in those sins we have embraced, we never will uncling, nor come to Christ: we must have our happiness inflicted on us and be goaded into bliss. But then

2. Learn hence how willing Christ is to have us come to him, when he makes use of Hell, not to punish onely them that will not come, but to drive us to come to him. Had it not bin enough for him to set before us life and death, and bid us take our choice? No, he knows our blind and unadvised appetites would chuse the guilt poison, the painted, the pleasant death, and make a Covenant with Hell; and therefore he lets us feel part of that Hell to fright us, and yet then receives us. To force us to love ease he lets us travel under the burdens of our own desiring, and yet after that invites us to rest: he do's not onely accept them whose choice he is not but refuge, when as he might reject us. You would none of me, but chose weight, load, and labor; go and look for ease thence. But alas! if I should bid you seek refreshment from your pleasant sins, what comfort would you find, when you are tired with those sins, and the pleasures of them do forsake you, and leave you nothing but the stings and horror of the after expectations? No no, come to me yet, I will receive you after all your refusals; and tho you come to me but as to a last hold having nothing else to trust to, tho you have already tri'd all other, and slighted me, you shall yet be welcome: my pierced side is yet open to receive all of
you

you that will yet come, and let you into my very heart; my arms are yet as wide as on the Cross, at their full length to take you into their embraces. Ah my Brethren, Christ doth not send us back to our beloved miseries when we come to him, but he makes those miseries a part of his Rhetoric to invite us, uses our labour and weariness to persuade us to come, makes those burdens the indearment of, and provocation to his ease, and Hell it self a part of his wooing. And how will he receive and embrace us, who doth thus desire and court us? The story of the Prodigal is hugely evictive of this, and so indulgent, that it would almost invite a man to sin; but then it do's far more invite a man, that will repent him of his sin, to be secure of God's acceptance. He that had so villanously betrayed his Father's dearnefs to his own beastlinefs and ruin, to whom all kindness would seem lost, and to receive him in again and to assist him would be but to encourage him, and to furnish him for a return back to the prodigalities of sin and to the former riots of iniquity; yet when he do's repent, he do's obtain far more than he desires: he is received to feast and bosom, is entertain'd much more than the first born, and had he never gon away he had not bin so dear. Do but consult the story *Luke 15*. When weary and fainting under the burden of himself, which his languishing spirits were scarce able to sustain, he came at last to himself, *v. 17*. and began to wonder that he chose to stay with husks, with famine, rather than to go to daily plenty, and chose to dwell in the unclean, uncomfortable company of swine before his Father's household, and then strait to think of leaving that condition and society, and to resolve on a return. When he began to put those resolutions into act, and his impotent starv'd limbs would scarce serve his desires, at least he was unable to make hast in the pursuit of his intentions, for he was yet a great way off *v. 20*. yet then his Father had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. His compassions did not keep state, or stand expecting till his ungracious son should come and humble himself, and deprecate and beg; but he ran to meet him, and made far greater hast to receive and entertain, than the other could do to be received; and as if the humiliations or weaknesses had bin on his side, he fell, at least the impotencies of his affection did vie with those of the others condition, for he fell on his neck and kissed him. And whereas his repenting son did resolve to become prostrate, and low in condition as well as posture, *I will go to my Father, and say unto him, Father, I have sinned before heaven and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants v. 18, 19*. I dare not hope for favor from any tie of nature which I have broken all; I do not beg thy kindness as the issue of thy Relation, but as the wages of my labor; I will serve for thy affections, and let me have it as the hire of my repentance and endeavors: but 'twas enough it seems to have resolv'd thus lowly in earnest; for when he comes to act it *v. 21*. as he had said *I am unworthy to be called thy son*, his Father cuts him off, and calls for the best Robe, and for a Ring, and for the fatted Calf, will not let him so much as beg to be a servant, but if he once acknowledge himself unworthy for a son, he puts him strait in such

an equipage as he may owne him in with credit, in the best Robe; and he rejoyces, quickens and sets out his joy with Feasts and Music. Now saith *Tertullian*, *Quis ille nobis intelligendus Pater?* What Father is this in the story? Why certainly 'tis God. No one so much a Father, no one so compassionate, if the Sinner once come to himself, as the prodigal son is said to do; for while he do's go on he is indeed beside himself and in a fit: and when he has collected sober thoughts about him, and do's compare his wanting husks with the full plenties of his Fathers house, the unsatisfying transient delights of sin, that have filthy toil and noisom drudgery in the gaining, and instantly when they are gain'd put out themselves, are gon, and leave nothing but snuff or stink behind, offence onely and trouble of mind; compar'd those with the gladfom expectations of blessedness, with the comforts that are in all the promises of Christ, and the feasts of our Fathers mansion, Gods entertainments, the glories he hath studied for those that love him, and being satisfied these are the better pleasure, resolves to leave the swine, his unclean beastly courses, and betake himself to his Father, he shall then find this fiction experience, and God outdoing all the Parables of himself. He will run to meet him that do's but set himself to come in earnest, not onely, as the proposition saies, accept his service, but prevent it; and however miserable, poor, and naked he do meet him, as the Sinner is *Rev. 3. 17.* he calls for the best Robe, even the Robe of Christ's Righteousness to put upon him, and puts a Ring upon his finger, he does espouse him to his Son, he kills the fatted calf, makes ready the supper of the Lamb for him, and it is the poor repenting Sinner's wedding supper with his Savior. It is a chapter full of comfort to the Penitent, and hath a greater advance for it than this story *v. 3, 4.* The Sinner he hath strayed into by-paths, gon away from the Shepherd of his soul, is a lost sheep; but yet when he is gon his farthest, and is in his mazes, knows not which way to betake himself, then this good Shepherd do's not invite onely to a return, or as the Father in the Parable run to meet him in his coming back, but he do's go himself to seek him, seems to mind the recovery of each single one that is lost, and contributes as carefully to his return, as if that one were all his charge, and the whole flock is not dearer to him than that one. He leaves the ninety and nine to seek that one, and he seeks till he finds it, and when he finds it he laies it on his shoulders. The wandering sheep was wearied it seems with straying, and had tir'd it self with running from its shepherd; but this too is provided for, he could not come home, therefore he is carried. It is not now, *Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden*, I will not refuse you. Nay when you are so lost in Labyrinths of guilt out of which you can see no issue, when you have so labor'd in the paths of error that you are not able to come home, if you will but be found, I will seek you, yea and carry you home too. That no one, how far soever he have gon away, may yet despair of coming home, this sheep had wander'd to such a distance and to so much weariness, that he was fain to be born back when he was found. And he laies it on his shoulders rejoycing, was glad of such a burden. How willing

willing is our Savior to find out a strayed Sinner, when after such long errors he do's seek him till he finds him, and carries him, if he be weak and fainting; yea and rejoyces in that carriage, as if that rest he gives the Sinner were such ease and refreshment to himself, he joys in it! And that joy spreads it self to Heaven, for there is joy in Heaven at that sight, and v. 10. *There is joy in the presence of the Angels of God over one sinner that repents.* *Heus tu peccator, bono animo sis, vides ubi de tuo reditu gaudeatur:* Thou poor disconsolate Sinner, that liest groveling under the sense of the burden of thy sins, thy soul sinking under that heavy weight, and sinking also in the waters of thy fears, drown'd in thy sorrow, be of good cheer. Dost thou not think there is some joy in this estate of thine, when it can make a joy in Heaven? Those tears assure thy self have comfort in them; for God, and Christ, and all the Angels do rejoyce at sight of them. And do not dread thy burden, if thou dost truly labor under it, and dost but faithfully desire and endeavor to throw it off thee. Dost thou not see him that laid the lost sheep on his shoulders as ready to take thee up? He that would not reject thy Cross when it was loaden with thy guilt, will not reject thy self when thou art lighted from that guilt. He that would receive thee on his shoulders when thou wast fainting under the burden of thy sins, when that is cast away into the sea and buried in his grave, will certainly receive thee into his bosom. He that would carry thee to give thee ease when thou wert wearied with running from him, when thou dost come to him and faint into his arms, will give thee everlasting rest; a rest whose blessedness to understand were to enjoy it, and to be able to conceive were to be infinite as it self is; a blessedness which to behold is beatific. O cast away your burdens and *make hast, and come and see.*

Lastly learn hence the method you are to take in coming to him, how you are to begin your journey. The first advance is by this conviction of the burden and horror of sin, till this be in us we will never move a step towards him. The Church hath taught us, when she invites us to come to him in Sacrament, to make the first step this confession, *We be heartily sorry for these our transgressions, the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable.* And Christ hath told us here, that we must find the very same things in our selves, an intolerable burden that tires and wearies us until we faint, before we come to him; we are otherwise no part of his invitation, will be no part of his retinue. And then whosoever thou art that art so far from finding them intolerable, that without them thy life is hardly tolerable, so far from burden, that thy very days are burdensom that are restrain'd from conversations of sin, that dost account them thy delight, not weariness, and art refresh't, not tir'd with them, and canst not think of parting with them: or if no very vicious company or custom hath brought thee to this necessity and height of sinning, yet thou look'st upon them as slight regardless things, mistakes and oversights that slip from thee, all whose repentance is but *Lord have mercy*, and never thinkest more of it, dost not apprehend that every such gross fault hath an eternal weight in it, and dost not humble thy self under

that weight; bethink thy self whether thou art yet in the way to Christ, or whether thou indeed be called to come. Oh no, the *κακῶν* are the men; for thou especially that takest pleasure in them, dost thou think Christ will call thee to do worse with him than the damned do in Hell? There they indeed nourish their sinfull appetites, their lusts advance, but their lusts are their plague and torment them, and they extremely hate and curse those things which they do passionately desire. Now that habitual Sinner his sins they are his employment, his delight too, he longs as those other, but he satisfies also and finds pleasure in them: and then, if those others be fit company for the Devils onely, canst thou believe thy self fit company for Christ, that he should bid thee come to him? No, begin to act thy Hell a little sooner, account them here thy torments, hate them in time, perceive them to be burdens while they may be laid down, and then come unto Christ, *and he will give thee rest.*

And evermore, O Lord, give us of thy rest, a rest from sin here, and a rest from misery eternally. Yea, O Lord, give us to labor, and to find trouble under that intolerable burden of our guilt, that we may with eager hast fly to the refreshment, that we perverse obdurate Sinners, whom thy mercies cannot invite, our own miseries may force to be happy: and tho our wickednesses are multiplied into an infinite mass and weight, yet despise us not, when we fall under them; for thou didst invite us to come, and bring all that load to thee: despise us not, tho heavy laden; for thou thy self didst bear this weight, and didst die under it. And O thou, who didst thy self thus suffer by reason of this load, pity us that labor with it, ease us of the burden of our former guilt, free us from the slavery of our iniquity, from bearing any longer Sathan's loads; then shall we at last sit down with thee in the Land of everlasting rest, deliver'd from all weights but that eternal weight of glory, and resting from all labors save that of praising thee, and ascribing all Honor, Power, Praise, Might, Majesty, and Dominion to Father, Son, and holy Ghost for evermore.

SER-

S E R M O N

X.

OF THE CHRISTIANS VICTORY

Over Death, Sin, and the Law.

1 Cor. 15. 57.

*Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory thro our Lord
Jesus Christ.*



THE words are the close of an ὑμνικόν, or Song of joy and triumph for a victory. Now a victory supposeth Enimies, and the verse before names them, and the Text shews us the means that they art conquer'd by, and who they are, that are partakers of the Victory. I shall declare and treat of both.

1. The Enimies here mention'd, and we may account them three, if that which gives both aid and strength to, fortifies our Enemy, be so; as sure it is. 1. Here is Death, which sin arms with a sting and do's envenome it. 2. Sin it self, empower'd and strengthned by the Law. 3. That Law also.

In the second place here are the means by which the Victory is gotten, and for whom --- *us the victory thro Jesus.*

In handling all which I shall shew

First, that the Law gives Sin all its strength, and how it do's so.

2^{ly} That Sin is the sting of Death, and how it is so.

3^{ly} That by Christ both the Law which is the strength of Sin is taken away, and Sin which is the sting of Death pull'd out; and so both Sin and Death so weaken'd that they cannot hurt now; and they shall be swallowed up in perfect victory: and who they are all this is don for. Of these all in this order, which I crave leave to speak to directly without any least diverting from the Text or Subject.

First I am to speak of the first preparations that are made against us in behalf of our Enimies; and that is to shew you, that the Law gives all the strength to Sin which it hath, and how it do's so.

Sin hath its very being from Law, it being ἀνομία, *the transgression of the Law*. 1 John 3. 4. and *Sin is not imputed where there is no Law* Rom. 5. 13. yea *where there is no Law there is no transgression* c. 4. 15. But this is not all, for in the Law besides the Precepts there is also Sanction, and it lays a twofold obligation; first to duty, secondly upon transgression to punishment.

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1. To duty, and that perfect and unfinning strict obedience; ^a Gal. 3. 10. for the terms are these, *Curst is he that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them.* And to this the whole man is oblig'd, the soul as well as body: *& caro & spiritus Dei res est*, saith *Tertull.* God made the soul as well as body, one's his creature as much as the other, and the one hath as much reason then to pay him honor and obedience as the other: if indeed the spirit hath not much more to obey him in its own motions and actings, than in those of the body, which are onely under it, and guided by it. So that thoughts are criminal against this Law, as well as doings; by them the Soul fulfils its part of the transgression, more it may be than its own share, while it robs the Flesh, seizes its satisfactions, and makes them her own against her nature. And indeed whatever part the Law is broken and transgrest by, 'tis transgression and sin still, whether by the mind, for lust when it hath conceived onely, sin is then begotten *James* 1. 15. or by the tongue, for of every idle word we must give an account at the day of Judgment, *Matth.* 12. 36. and by thy words thou shalt be condemn'd. Or lastly by the works. So that according to the Tenor of this strict and severe Law whatever we can do, or indeed whatever we do not, is Sin: besides commissions that are sinful there is still defect, and so transgression in our thoughts, our words, and deeds even in the best; and in not doing also there's omission, and so failing. But besides this severe obligation of the Law to duty, upon this our faileur there is a severer obligation

2. To punishment; for every sin is curst, as we saw. Upon this account *the Law*, saith *S^t Paul*, *worketh wrath*, *Rom.* 4. 15. we are *children of wrath*, *Eph.* 2. 3. whose inheritance is destruction, and who are of right to possess onely the sad issues of God's indignation: for to this the Law condemns us all, by reason of our Sins; and upon that account *the Law* is said to be *the strength of Sin*. Because by force and vertue of this threatning of the Law, we that have sinned are therefore liable and obnoxious to the condemnation of it. And this I take to be the meaning of that place *Rom.* 7. 7, 8, 9, 10. *I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known concupiscence, except the law had said thou shalt not covet. But sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence: for without the law sin was dead, --- but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died, and the commandment which was ordain'd to life, I found to be unto death.* The Apostle's drift here is not to evince how the commandment begets sin, but how it makes sin condemning, begets death: and therefore I believe they are mistaken who expound, *sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence*, as if it meant the Law onely prohibiting, but not quelling sin in me; the more it was restrain'd, the more it wrought all manner of concupiscence in me, especially since there was no punishment assign'd to that sin in the Law; it took advantage thence more powerfully to engage me in the pursuit of all my lusts, since thence I might have hop't without any fear of punishment to pursue them. For this seems perfectly to thwart his aim, which was to shew us how the Law wrought condemnation, and inflicted death by

by threatening it. It seems to mean, I had not onely not known sin to be so dangerous, but I had not known some things to be sins, and by consequence condemning things, but by the Law: particularly I had not known concupiscence to be so, had not the Law said *thou shalt not covet*. The next words do not seem intended to declare how the Commandment works sin, that being brought in by the by, as it were thus, but sin the corruption of my nature *ἐστὶν ἡ ἀποφύμις* had wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, all actual lusts and wickednesses *ἀποφύμις λαβὼν* got advantage over me or strength against me by the Law: which he there proves, for *without the law sin is dead*; not as to stirring in us by its sinful motions sure, corruption would not fail to do that and more if there were no check; but dead, had no strength nor power to condemn me. For it follows, *when the commandment came, sin reviv'd*, got strength to do that, *and I died*, was sentenc'd to death by it, *and the commandment which was ordain'd to life* could I have obey'd it, *I found to be unto death* by condemning me to death for my transgression of it. For sin by the Commandment *ἀποφύμις λαβὼν* getting advantage over me slew me; not onely made me liable to death, but by its guilt envenoming that death: for *the sting of death is sin*, which that it is, and how it is so, is the second thing I am to speak to.

Sin is the *sting of death*, which I could make appear two mannner of ways in relation to two senses that may be given to the words, both pertinent, and the one but the Anticipation of the other. The first is this: Sin is the sting of death; 'tis Sin makes the thoughts of death pungent and stinging; the wicked man cannot think of his last dying day without horrors, the onely imagination of a sickness stings him, because he is conscious to himself of sin, and he knows that *that after Death cometh the Judgment*, and he dares not think of beholding the face of his Judg with his guilt upon him.

To prove this to you I shall not need to fetch any heathen Testimonies, that call the Conscience of Sin a whip, a sting, a goad, a lancing knife, things that gash and prick, and gall and fret, all words of all kinds of terrifying punishment: but if there be any gross customary Sinner that now hears me, I shall need no other way of proof, but by appealing to his own conscience, whether, when he comes hot from his iniquity, he dares entertain the thought of dying. And why not? Alas he is too deep in arrears to venture upon account with so impartial a Judg; books must be laid open if he come there, the closet curtain sins, nay the bosom villanies must be displaid, and every one receive his doom; he hath heard, that all the ^b refuge of a deplored Sinner at that great and terrible Day of the Lord is but to fly unto the Mountains to cover him, and to the Rocks to hide him. A wretched hope; for how shall the Hills hide him, whose iniquities are like Mountains? or how shall the rocks cover him, whose rebellions are like *the great deep*, as the Scripture words it? To such a person Death and Judgment are words of too dangerous a sense, and it's easier for him (as many do) to resolve there is no such thing as one of them, than to think of them, and go merrily on in sinning. For tell me, what is the design of that variety

^b Luke 23.30.
Rev. 6.16.

e Amos 6. 3.

variety of iniquities in which thou dost ingulf thy self, that circle of sins wherein one relieves and succeeds another? Sure by such a perpetuity of diversified delights to stave off those severer thoughts, which if there were an intermission of sinning, or a nauseating of one sin for want of variety, would creep in, the noise of our riots is not to please the ear, but to drown the barking of our consciences. When the Sinner's candle is put out, if weariness in wickedness do not at once close up his eyes and thoughts, if the dark solitary night do but suggest some melancholly thoughts into him, how do's he tumble up and down, as if he thought to role away from his imagination? and he do's ransack his fancy, and call up the memory of his past sins about him to entertain himself with all, and keep out the torturing remembrance of that sad Day, which the Scripture calls *putting far from them the evil day*: for the truth is he dares not give it place, least it should happen to him, as to a man upon a pointed precipice, (as himself is indeed situated) to whom the apprehension would be as mortal as the danger, and he would tumble down for fear of falling. So here his sin adds such sharps to the imagination of death, that he dares not entertain the thought.

And if Sin be such a sting in the onely thought of death, that the mere remembrance of it is insupportable, the use is very natural by the frequent calling of death to mind to stop the current of sin. For if the wicked cannot endure to think of death, he that does think on it, cannot well go on to be wicked. Remember thy latter end, and thou shalt not do amiss. I would give this counsel, Think thou art to die while doing it. The original of the *Turks* Turbant, which was but by continual wearing of his winding sheet, by wrapping his head in his grave-cloaths to have always a shroud and death upon his thoughts; and the Philosophers defining their wisdom to be but *contemplatio mortis*, are not such pregnant inforcers of this use, as this practical apprehension of it. The man that liv'd among the Tombs, tho he had a legion of Devils in him, yet *when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him*, Mark 5. 6. The sight of graves and conversation with monuments will make even Demoniacks Religious, and is so far from thrusting Praiers out of the Liturgy of Burial, that it brings the very Devils on their knees.

But there is yet another and a fuller sense of these words, which St Paul repeats out of the LXX. translation of *Hosea* 13. 14. tho not *verbatim*, for there instead of *νεκρον* is *θνη*, and signifies, *O Death, where is thy plea* by which thou didst attaint men before God's Tribunal? where is the right thou hadst over all men to seize and take possession of them? what's become of the sentence that was awarded thee, by which all of us were adjudg'd to be thy bond-slaves? where is that punishment which thou didst inflict upon us all, and by it ruin us? To all these rights Sin did entitle thee, O Death; or as it is here in the Text *Sin is thy sting*, whatsoever power thou hast of hurting man, as the Scorpion's venom lies in his sting, that power Sin hath given thee, and in that it lies: without Sin Death were no plague, and it is this that makes Death insupportable.

Now

Now to prove this I need not urge more than what I have already said; for if Sin be a sting in the very thought of Death, much more pungent will it be, when Death it self approaches: when the Feaver shall lay hold upon the blood, not onely to revenge the former heats of that lustful or that riotous blood, but to be dawns of those eternal Burnings which do await the Sinners, and shall do more than represent unto thee the heats of that unquenchable brimstone which is to be thy lot, and which already doth begin to flash in upon thee. Which part of thee do's labor with the more intolerable Feaver, thy Body or thy Soul? Alas the frost of the Grave would seem to thee a Julip, a cool refreshment onely, if Sin did not make thee look upon the grave as a downlet to that bottomless pitt, which is the lake of fire that is not quencht. Nothing possibly can keep an unrepentant Sinner, that on his death-bed apprehends his guilt, from the horror of despair, from being his own Devil, and suffering his own Hell in his own bosom upon earth. I shall demonstrate this invincibly to you, that Sin do's, and nothing else do's make Death most insupportable, when it approaches.

Now to evince this, my Argument is none other than our Blessed Savior himself, in whose Passion the onely imputation of guilt seems to have rais'd the greatest contradictions imaginable. If you look upon him preparing for his Passion, it seems his onely and most pleasing design; as he came into the world for that end, so his whole life before it was but a Prologue to it, onely a walk to mount *Calvary*, it was his extreme desire. *I have a baptism to be baptiz'd with*, baptiz'd indeed with fire and his own clotted sweat of blood, yet this Baptism *how am I streighten'd till, it be accomplished*, *Luke 12. 50.* He had longing throws after it, he did as much desire it as a woman to be deliver'd of her burden. Nay it was his contrivance, he did lay plots that he might not escape it; for when a glorious Miracle had broke from him, that did extort the confession of his Deity from Men and Devils, he charges these to hold their peace, and bids the other tell it no man: one reason of which was, least the knowing him to be the Son of God should hinder him from suffering. He gives it himself *Luke 9. 21, 22.* *he straitly charg'd and commanded them to tell no man that thing, saying the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected;* now should they know I were the Son of God, *they would not crucify the Son of glory.* You see what care he takes least he should not suffer: and just before his passion he come in triumph to *Jerusalem*, with songs and joy about him, as if Death were the onely pleasant thing, and his passion so desirable, that he would go ride to meet it, which he never did at any other time. And add to all this that the person was the Son of God, to whom nothing could be truly insupportable; yet when this person comes to meet it, see how he entertains it, *his soul is exceeding sorrowfull*, he fell on his face to pray against it, and while he was in this condition an Angel from Heaven came to *strengthen him*, yet he is still in an agony and prays more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood. Now 'twas the sense of Sin upon him that made his blood run out in clotts, as it were flying from that sense; it was the apprehensions of the guilt

1 Cor. 2. 8.

Luke 22.
43, 44.

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imputed to him, and the wrath which he knew was due to it, did make him apprehend his God (who was himself) was gon from him, made him cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Now to say that all this dread were from the mere apprehension of death, were horrid blasphemy; the meanest Martyr was never guilty of so much weakness. No 'twas from the sense of the iniquity that was upon it, 'twas because he was made sin for us; he was *a man of sorrows*, saith the Prophet *Isaiah*, because in representation he was a man of sins, for *he bore our iniquities*, saith the same Prophet *c. 53. The Lord had laid upon him the iniquities of us all*, and therefore *he was oppressed*. And so I have made appear, that Sin is the sting of Death more than if your selves did feel it by an experimental despair: for it is more that Sin should make Death terrible to the Son of God, than that it should make it insupportable to you. And therefore before Death seize you, and prostrate you into his dust, this consideration may humble you into the dust and ashes of Repentance; this I say, if Sin were a sting that made Death so insupportable to Christ, what will it be to us? If the apprehension of it, when it came arm'd ouely with the imputation of our guilt, (for he himself *knew no sin*) was so terrible to the Son of God, how shall we stand under it, when it brings all our own iniquities to seize upon us? If he that was a person of the Trinity could not bear the weight, how shall we sink under it? That which made our Jesus in an agony, as if he meant to pour out his soul in his sweat, and pray, and roar, and die, will certainly be to us most infinitely beyond sufferance. Alas! what then will be our hope? We have certainly none, except we can by Faith and Repentance rid our selves of this Sin, which is the sting of Death, and makes it to be thus intolerable; which how it comes to pass I must now shew.

2. Why, and how Sin is the sting of Death. Sin may seem very properly to be call'd a sting of Death, for it was the Serpent that brought Death into the World, and Sin was that by which he did inflict it; now a sting is a Serpent's proper instrument, and a venomous sting it was, that could blast Paradise, and shed destruction there where the Tree of life bore fruit. But that is not all the reason why it should be call'd the sting of Death because it makes us obnoxious to Death, but it is that which makes Death a miserable condition: as it is the sting of the Serpent that makes him a poysonous creature, so it is that which makes Death destructive. For were Death the expiration of that little spark in the moving of our heart, and if our spirit utterly vanish as the soft air, and were it as the Atheist in the *Wise man* says, *we are born at all adventure, and shall be hereafter as tho we had never bin*; Death would be so far from all sting, that it would be perfect rest, and the end of troubles: but Sin makes it onely the beginning of sorrows, it changes the very nature of death, by making that which seems to be the cessation of sensible function, to be the very original of the sensibility of torments. Then the Sinner doth begin indeed to feel, when he dies. Death were but the term of a miserable life, did not Sin make it the birth of a more miserable life or death: I know not whether to

to call it; for it is of so strange a nature, that the very uniting of a Sinner's body and soul, which is the onely thing we call life, God calls death, *Rev. 22. 13, 14. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell, or the grave, deliver'd up the dead which were in them, that is, the bodies to be joyn'd to the souls, and they were judg'd every man according to their works, and in that case all are cast into the lake of fire, this is the second death.* Sin makes Resurrection to be dying: and it must needs be so, because as afflictions are in this life call'd death, as *S^t Paul* saith *in Deaths often*; so much more then may those torments of hell be call'd death. So that in that death that Sin engages to, it is necessary to live always, that we may for ever die: and it must be so, because this makes us liable to the eternal indignation of the offended God, which we were not capable of suffering, were it not a death of this nature. This is indeed death with a sting in it, and it is the sense of this approaching that wounds the dying soul; when it do's at once call to mind the wickedness of its past life and the wrath that do's await it, when he recollects how sinful he hath bin, and withall how hateful sin is to God, (so hateful that it was easier for God to send his Son to suffer death, than to suffer sin to go unpunish'd) then his own expectations sting and stab his very soul; for if God did thus use his own Son, how will he use me, that have both sinn'd and trod under foot the death of that Son by going on wilfully in my sins? Would you then, my Brethren, find out a way to make death easy and familiar to you? you must pull out this sting. The *Jews* say if *Adam* had continued righteous he should not have died, but after a long happy life God would have taken up his soul to him with a kiss, which they call *osculum pacis*, he would have receiv'd that spirit which with his mouth he did inspire, a kiss of taking leave here to meet in Heaven. Wouldst thou have thy death to be the same thing? 'Tis but becoming righteous with the righteousness of Christ, thro whom we have this Victory here in the Text, the other part I am to speak to, *who giveth us the victory thro Jesus Christ our Lord*; where we have those that are partakers of the Victory, and the means *thro Jesus Christ our Lord*, and as to both these this I shall demonstrate over all those enemies in order, who the *us*, and how the *Victory* is gotten.

First the Law. Now that *Christ hath redeem'd us from the curse of the Law*, is said expressly, and that by his *being made a curse for us*, *Gal. 3. 13.* and what that curse of the Law was, is set down in the tenth verse, *curst is every one that continueth not in all things, that are written in the book of the Law to do them*; which no man besides Christ did ever or can do, and consequently all mankind lay under that same dreadful curse, obnoxious to the wrath of God, and the effects of everlasting indignation: but Christ by undergoing that curse and by that means satisfying that strict Law, procur'd an easier to be set us upon gentler terms, not perfect and unfinning strict obedience, which was impossible, but instead thereof the Law of Faith, obsequious Faith that works by love, endeavors honestly and heartily, and where it fails repents, that is, grieves, and amends, and perseveres in doing so. For as *S^t Paul* assures us, *we are not under the Law, but under Grace, Rom. 6. 14.* tho we be under

der the directions of it, the duty of it is most indispensable vertue always; yet we are not under those strict terms of it according to the tenor of that curse, but in a state of favor, under terms of grace, where there is mercy, pardon to be had upon repentance thro faith, and where there is encouragement and aid to work that faith and that amendment in us. And thus far the Victory accrues to all mankind; for all that will accept these terms of this remedying Law of grace, the other killing strict Law hath no power over them. For the Gospel was commanded to be preach'd to, and its terms offer'd every creature under heaven, all mankind: a victory this, that could not be obtain'd, but by Christ's blood; the grace and favor of these easier terms for our obedience valued equal with his life; for to take of this curse, *curst is every one that continueth not in all things, that are written in the book of the law to do it*, these strict terms, he himself was made a curse: and 'twill be certainly a most unkind return, if that which he thought worth the dying for to get us, we shall not think worth the accepting, slight these blessed terms, and do not care unless we can be free from all necessity of an endeavor, freed from vertue too as well as Law.

But secondly the Law being, as we have shew'd it is, the strength of Sin in giving it a power to condemn us, that Law being taken off, that power also cannot but be taken off from Sin, and by that means the great strengths of that Enemy defeated. Accordingly St Paul do's tell the *Romans c. 6. v. 14. Sin shall not have dominion over you*, that is, it shall not have by vertue of the Law a power to condemn you; *for you are not under the Law but under grace*, are in that state where men are not condemn'd for every gross or heinous sin altho too long continued in, but there is pardon to be had for them that will but faithfully endeavor to amend, turn from their sins, return to Christ, receive him and his pardon: and where there is also help to do this, 'tis a true state of grace; so that unless men will resolve to force their own guards that are set about them to preserve them, and break thro the strengths of grace, and conquer all the strivings of Almighty God's compassion and goodness to them, and beat off the very victory that Christ hath gain'd for them, refuse all the kind offers of the Law of grace, and chuse sin with damnation, they are safe; *There is now*, as St Paul saith, *by the Law no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, to them who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 1. in which words we have both an assurance that the strengths of Sin are broken, and the persons too are partakers of the Victory, *that are in Christ Jesus*: for as it is by him the Victory is gotten, so it is in him that we must get an interest in it. Now *to be in Christ*, if, as most certainly it doth, it mean here as in other places, where 'tis said of Churches, households, and of single persons, then it means the Christians: so in *Gal. 1. 22. the Churches of Judea that are in Christ*, i. e. that have received the Gospel and the Faith of Christ; *Rom. 16. 11. greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, that are in the Lord*, i. e. that are Christians; and the seventh verse, *who were in Christ before me*, i. e. were converted ere I was. But it means Christians not in judgment and opinion onely, but in life and practice;

dice; such as are in Christ by S^t Pauls character and description of it in the 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, he lives the life of Christ as a member does the life of that of which it is a member, and so he walks not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* For as members live by the vertue of the influence of spirits from the head into them and walk after its directions, so those that are in Christ, his members, they must walk, live, act and practise by the Spirit of Christ, guided not by carnal appetite, the lusts and the desires of the Flesh, but by Christ's directions. Such they are who have this Victory, *to whom there is no condemnation.* For as he adds Rom. 8. 2. *The law of the Spirit of life that is in Christ Jesus, sets us free from the law of sin and death:* and so there is thro him a Victory over the third, last enemy Death: in which freedom from Sin and Death two things are intimated.

1. That Sin the sting of Death is taken away, which being once removed, Death is the softest thing that can be, 'tis but falling asleep; so it is call'd v. 18. of this chapter, *fallen asleep in Christ:* it is so far from being hurtful, that it is the first great happiness that does befall us.

2. That Death it self also shall be swallowed up in Victory, that we shall be recovered from its powers, and triumph over it in Immortality of blessed life. For if we be in Christ, his members, and so live the life of Christ; and consequently when we die, die in the Lord: then tho the body be dead and corruptible, yet *if the Spirit of life that is in Jesus be in us, he that rais'd up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit,* Rom. 8. 11. It is this life in him that verifies the saying of S^t Paul Eph. 2. 6. *He hath raised us up, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ,* as sure as if we were already there: for there we are already as his members in our head. And to the full and personal enjoyment of the blessings of those heavenly places it is death that lets us in; that *vale of Achor is the door of hope and Canaan,* the grave the avenue to God's right hand: that death, 'tis but the Pascha in S^t Bernard, 'tis our Passover, a repast of bitter herbs indeed, but at the going out of Egypt from the house of bondage. And tho the body seem in death a piteous despicable thing, *sown in corruption & dishonor,* as ^k S^t Paul expresses, ^k 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43. yet death gives that a relation too to Christ: the Prophet *Isaiah* brings in the Lord calling His dead נבליהו *cadaver*, *they my dead body shall arise,* saith he c. 26. 19. So that the corps of a good person is so far a member, that 'tis call'd the very body of his Savior, into such a title Death translates it; to such not to live onely, but to die is Christ. And sure if they that die in him, did live in him, (as none can die there where they did not live at all) that is live as his members, they that die in Christ must die his members. But in the expression of the Prophet they do also die himself, and are Christ's own dead body. Death to such is as it were transfiguration, and do's not so much strip and make them naked, as cloath them, and that with glory; the shroud may seem but their white wedding linnen, and their drefs for the marriage of the Lamb. Whoever is a faithfull sincere Christian, if Death seem to make approaches to him arm'd with all his instruments of cruelty and terror, charge

him as assuredly as a Prophet could to set his house in order, for he must die; if he can say with *Hezekiah* in *Isaiah* 38. 3. *Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart and have done that which is good in thy sight*, then if he have not fifty years, yet he shall have a numberless Eternity added to his life; and notwithstanding the dark solitude of the Grave to which he is retiring, he shall have that which will accompany him to his infinite joy: when he is torn from friends, and all his dearest things do leave him, yet he shall not be alone, his faith and piety, his virtues all go along with him, and appear for him at that tribunal on the Judgment day. All his relations, even his bosom-guest, the other half of his own soul forsake him, bring him it may be to the grave, and tho they carry blacks upon them to retrein and keep alive the memory of him, yet in a while take comfort and forget; yet the true conjugal affections of an untainted, undefiled bed shall go along, present the Soul white, as a Virgin that's unspotted. And after this 'tis in vain to say his riches will forsake him, they go not so far as the grave, afford nothing of themselves but the price of a sheet and coffin. But then Charities will mount, Alms will ascend as fast as the Spirit; the wealth one piously bestow'd will meet him, he shall eternally possess that which he gave away, and tho his place know him no more, they shall receive him into everlasting habitations. ¹ *Wherefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, which is the real way of giving thanks to God, who giveth us the Victory.*

1 Cor. 15. 58.

SER-

S E R M O N

XI.

OF THE CHRISTIAN'S BLESSEDNES

In beholding God's Face.

Pſalm 17. 15.

As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.

Or as the other Rendering reads it, very little different from that.

But as for me I will behold thy presence in righteousness, and when I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.



THE words import an expreſs oppoſition between the ſatisfactions of the perſon in the Text, and thoſe of them that are deſcrib'd before here in the context, namely of *the men of the world which have their portion in this life, and whoſe belly thou, O God, filleſt with thy hid treasure, v. 14.* of whom he had alſo ſaid *v. 10. they are incloſed in their own fat, their mouth ſpeaketh proud things, i. e.*

the ſatisfaction of theſe wordlings lies in this, that they are great and rich, abound with all things, that they and their children have their fill of their deſires, & they leave plentiful remains to their poſterity; theſe advantages of this life are the onely good things which they value and ſeek after, they receive them as their portion, and the having them ſo plentifully makes them proud of the poſſeſſion, inſolent in the uſe: but as for my part I will ſerve thee faithfully, truly and juſtly, and with all ſincerity and diligence in the performance of my duty; I will ſeek thy face, mercy and favor, and ſo doing wait till thou liſt up the light of thy countenance upon me: and then whatſoever my condition be on this earth, where I would not *have my good things*, I expect other ſort of portion from my Heavenly Father; yet when I awake out of the duſt at thy appearance in thy glory, ſince *we know that when he ſhall appear we ſhall be like him*, then at my riſing it will be impoſſible that any thing which is to ſatisfy me, can be wanting to me: for my ſatisfactions cannot but be Glorious, Divine, Infinite, and Immortal, as thine are, *if I awake up in thy likenesſ.* So that we have here

a 1 John 3. 2.

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1. The nature of that state, and the certain satisfactions of it, which King *David* did propose to, and assure himself of: *to awake up after God's likeness, and he knows he shall be satisfied with it.*

2. The sure means of arriving at this state, *beholding of God's face in righteousness.*

3. His peremptory resolution as to the use of these means, *I will behold.*

4. With the courage of resolution, which is taken up against the almost universal practice and the as great contradiction of the World, that generally minds far different satisfactions, I declare publicly and confess, *But as for me, I will.*

1. The nature and the certain satisfactions of that state, which holy *David* in the Spirit did propose to, and assure himself of. The state the Psalmist do's suppose expressly here: a state to which he shall awake out of the sleep of death. For however some expound his words another way; yet from his opposition of himself as to his own expectations, to the men of this world as to their enjoiments, and declaring of them that they have their portion in this life, 'tis plain he sets his not in this life; in that therefore which he says he shall awake to. That state also which *S^t Paul* assure us *Heb. 11.* all the Patriarchs did look for, & which all the Nation of the *Jews* had such a faith of, that the *Sadduces* were always from their first appearance counted Heretics for their denying it. That I say there is such a state now, after so much signal revelation, after so much miracle of Resurrections from death, is not to be made the argument of a discourse to Christians, who can be such no otherwise nor further than as they believe and are assur'd of it. And it seems altogether as absurd to undertake to treat upon the nature of that state, which

b 2 Cor. 12.
3. 4.

^b *S^t Paul*, after he had had a taste of it, says is *unspeakable and not possible to be utter'd*; which he was so far from knowing after he had bin in it, that he knew not himself in it, knew not whether he were in the body or out of it, when he did enjoy that state: which *S^t Peter* when he had a glimpse in our Saviors Transfiguration, & in the astonishment by reason of the light, attempted but to speak of it, it is said ^c *he knew not what he said*, it put him so beside, out of himself.

c Luke 9. 33.

d 1 Cor. 2. 9.

^d Scripture says *it cannot enter into the heart of man to comprehend it*, while he is in this animal and mortal state. And indeed it were the same thing as to comprehend what is the Incomprehensible God himself; for 'tis the nature of that state that we *awake into his likeness*, the Text says, and *S^t John* hath said the same more expressly *1 John 3. 2. Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he, or it shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* I do not find it said in Scripture of the Angels in what ever rank of Principality they stand, that they are like God; rather to be like the most High is believ'd that very ambition that destroy'd all those that fell. But as when man was made out of the dust he was the onely creature that was said to be made after God's own image and similitude; so after he is fallen again into that dust, when he awakes out of it, he is that onely thing that is say'd ^e *to bear the image of the Lord* from

e Cap. 15. 49.

from Heaven, to be like God. And 'tis not strange if that nature, which God did assume to himself, come at last to be glorified with some endowments which transcend all those of Angels; yet 'tis said of them, *they always see the face of our heavenly Father* Matt. 18. 10. To see God therefore as he is, do's seem more, than to see his face continually, and is such a sight as if it do not causally produce a likeness to God in us, which yet possibly it may, and the Schools think it do's, yet 'tis certain that it consequentially proves 'tis absolutely necessary that we shall be like him, otherwise it were impossible that we should *see him as he is*. Which evidently follows from the Argument of our Apostle, *we know we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*; so that such a sight of him is that which either makes us or concludes us like God: yea and that to such a degree, that in *S^t Peter's* words *we are made partakers of the Divine nature*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. I shall not undertake to be interpreter to the Apostles as to this expression, or to give the meaning of those words; but whatsoever more it may imply, surely it signifies that those Attributes that are essentially natural to the Divinity, as the Omniscience of his understanding, perfect rectitude and purity of his will; and not to enumerate particulars, perpetual, blessed, infinite delight in the unwearied, uninterrupted exercise of his understanding in the utmost latitude of its comprehensions, and the undisturb'd enjoyment of his holy will in all things, all this unchangeable, because spiritual and immortal; of all these, so much as is communicable to a creature, man shall then partake of, be exalted into: yea so far partake in all of it, as he is exalted into an estate to *see God as he is*. And this is certainly enough to make good *David's* expectations, that when he *shall awake up after God's likeness*, he *shall be satisfied with it*; and truly 'twere great simplicity to go about to prove so far as any one is like to him, who is the Fountain of Eternal Blessedness: and so far as himself is happy and unchangably is so, that he must needs be satisfied; for it imports a contradiction at once to be happy and unsatisfied, since so far as any person is unsatisfied, wants any thing that he would have, so far he is uneasy and not happy; either sure unhappy in not having it, or else most certainly unhappy in desiring it, which cannot be in any one that *is like God*. But King *David* seems wary in his expression here, *when I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it*; as if he did not count them satisfactions at the present, to the state and condition he was then in, or at least the apprehensions he then had. And indeed *S^t Paul*, who tasted the joys of it, says he knew not whether he were *in the body or no*, so that it seems that half of him was not concern'd at all in those transports of those joys: and it is no wonder therefore if most men, that never had a taste of any thing but what is sensual and worldly, have bin entertain'd onely with satisfactions of those appetites that rise from body, have no apprehensions, or at least no relish for those other, which not onely to enjoy but understand, men must be spiritual to some degree; for *they are spiritually discern'd*, saith the Apostle, f 1 Cor. 2. 14. and *the natural man* that hath no other guide but sense, or what is wholly founded upon sense and imagination, cannot taste or fancy

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them with any life at all. Yet notwithstanding this how dim soever and faint the images of those things were in *David's* time, before *the Sun of Righteousness* was risen, and had brought to light that blessed Immortality and Glory of that state, the very expectation was so satisfying, that it could ingage him to pursue them, & attempt to compass them: & that he might, after he should be awak'd from death, *see God as he is*, and by consequence be *like him*, he resolves he will *behold his face in righteousness* here in this life, as being satisfied that *in his presence there was fulness of joy, and at his right hand pleasures for evermore*. When alas after all the advantages, the force and beauty which the Gospel-revelations have enricht the draught of that state with, yet now men do not apprehend any such satisfaction in it, as can quicken an affection or endeavor after it; they will not move a step nor a desire towards it.

g Mal. 4. 2.

h Psalm 16. 11.

And here as to this I will neither wonder at, nor instance in the men whose minds the pomps, the gauderies, the heights, the state, and what do's furnish all, the wealth and riches of this world have seized; if such men be not taken off from the pursuit of these things by invisible Treasures, and by spiritual Thrones and Scepters; or if they whose souls have dwelt long in their dishes and their cups, who drink to create thirst, eat to hunger, are not pleas'd much with a state whose happiness is said to be, that men shall neither hunger nor thirst in it; or if they whom all the pleasures of the flesh sawc'd with variety have made loose and dissolute, will not be tempted to restrain themselves in those bounds that are set to chaste tongues, chaste eyes, or chaste bodies; or tho they may be mov'd it may be to dismiss a while, yet cannot be made willing to divorce their lusts by notions of an happiness for Spirits that have no sex, where they *neither marry nor are given in marriage*, but are *like God*. I will not call in here for evidence that most men have no satisfying apprehensions of the Blessedness of that state, since altho they had, yet there are appetites in the constitution to those other satisfactions that are opposite to all these Blessednesses, and these appetites are hot and fierce, have bin long pamper'd, and now will not be deni'd, being grown too strong for any notions of the understanding to make head against them. But here is one fatal instance that will certainly evince men have no pleasing sense of the condition of that after-state, they do not fancy it with any takingness at all, and it is this, that in those duties of Religion which have nothing opposite to any carnal appetite, which of themselves retrench not any of our sensual satisfactions, yet most men have all unwillingnesses to them, deadness in them. To name one of them, Prayer for example, which is rather privilege than duty, a most blessed, merciful indulgence, such as if God had not onely not commanded but not given us leave for, we must have thought our selves most wretchedly unhappy, since 'tis but giving us leave to pour out all our wants into the bosom of our Father who is both Almighty and most Mercifull, to beg those things which if we have not, we are miserable here and everlastingly, and which Christ's blood that purchas'd them does joyn in intercession with us, when we pray in earnest for them, and our sighs mixe with his agonies and

and the merit of his dying groans to his and our Father for us. Now there is not one appetite in our making that's adverse to praying, as there are many to strict virtues; 'tis not uneasy to the flesh, nor yet repugnant to its satisfactions; it is not possible to find a ground on which one can dislike it: and then to see men backward to it, languid and dead in it, weary of it, suffering little avocations to divert them at it, wandring, going from it while they are about it, engag'd in it; glad to make quick end of it, seeking out occasions to pretermitt it; yea more, out of an insensible stupidity long omitting, not at all performing it, as if that men had nothing at all to desire of God, or at least nothing they desir'd so much, that they will take the pains to ask in earnest for it. Now 'tis impossible to give an account of this, there's no imaginable reason but that men have no concern or value for, nor apprehensions of the things they pray for. 'Tis plain men perform chearfully what tends to those things they affect and fancy, especially if it be not uneasy nor at all distastfull: they have no sense therefore of the things above, that should give life and heat and motion to their Praiers; those Blessednesses have no tast or relish to them, are so far from being matter of concernment, that the very asking for them seems to them an unkind interruption of their divertisments, any the least trifling thought of which is sufficient to call off their hearts from the desire of Heaven, from the object of their praiers; of so little regard it is to them, and so mean a satisfaction to be *like God*. *Mahomet* was aware this was the temper of the most of mankind, and he therefore baited his Religion with delights of their acquaintance, joys that should not need a revelation, miracles, or faith to make them apprehended pleasant; but he drest his Paradise with immortal sensualities, strong and eternal lusts made up his heavenly delights; and then altho their pleasures are but in reversion (as the Christians are) after a life, yet his Profelytes grew upon Christianity, are still very numerous, and they bear restraints and practise that which Christians cannot be invited to, and what with love to their Religion and those expectations will charge fire, and run upon canon to be shot into their Paradise; when after all that God hath don to prepare Blessednesses for a Christian, and all that Christ hath don to purchase and secure them to him, he finds no attractiveness in them.

I shall not bring the one and the other satisfactions to a vie, not onely that I may not entertain you with a common place, but the comparison would be shamefull, and indeed would serve no ends: not the conviction surely of a sensual person; for an Epicure that was born blind, and never had any notice of any of those beauties that surprize astonish, and transport men, but what their discourse can give him, is not certainly by that to be convinc'd the pleasures of the eye transcend those of the palate, 'tis a thing at least they cannot judg of: nor can they, whose souls are fill'd with all the images of the delights of sensuality, and who have no apprehensions of God's spiritual, blessed satisfactions, compare or judg between them, nor can therefore be convinc'd by our comparing of them: yet if these men would but reflect a little, this consideration

here might serve to help, if not their imagination, yet their faith of those joys. Namely that if we think God made these comforts here below, and fitted them just to our making, so as that we cannot fancy or imagine pleasures more appropriate to our present state, and we could think a long untroubled age of them great happiness; and if we think too, when these comforts and our selves are dead, that he will raise us up into another life, a world in which he hath prepar'd rewards for those that liv'd here as they ought according to his will, that us'd the pleasures of this world by those rules and at those calm rates that he allows them: then we must conclude that it is certain he both can and will make some as good at least, and as appropriate to that condition in which he shall place us. He that can raise us up out of the dust of death, can he not also quicken joys and make a resurrection of delights, and as he alters the condition of our being, temper pleasures to it, as he fitted those here to our present state? What tho you know not how to fancy satisfactions of another frame than those you now enjoy which you could like to change for? Think you the infant in the womb, while it enjoys ease and content in its close dark cell, can fancy the cheerfulness of a lightsom world, which the Sun guilds with comfortable shine? or that the child hath any notion of the strong contents of riper age? or can he possibly imagine there are any such delights as those his babies and rattles afford him? have any flavor of the manly pleasures which mere reason gives, and humane knowledg entertain us with? And so may not men grow past their babies? God hath we see proportion'd satisfactions to each state of being, to their own degree still in an excellent order; and shall his knowledg or his power fail to do so, when we drop out of this life into another, and are born to spirituality & to immortality? or will he not be so good to his Select ones as he hath bin to all mankind, yea to the beasts here; give us joys as great as those of sense are, which the beasts possess, or which is more, the wicked have in greatest affluence? He that will let these satisfactions stream upon the men he hates so, does he not know how, or can he not, or will he not provide greater for his beloved ones, for those which he hath studied happiness for? Would he give his own Son to die, shed his own blood to redeem us into a worse estate? or will he work a miracle of power, create a resurrection, that he may reward us to our loss? All this is most unreasonable to imagine, so that altho we cannot comprehend the blessedness of that state, we cannot paint the glory that we shall be cloth'd with, cannot fancy the delights God hath prepar'd; yet we are sure they must transcend most infinitely those of this life. The truth is all discourse is but reproch to them, if ever any person had bin truly satisfied with any one or with all the enjoyments of this life. If there were ever any one of those, who in the transports of a passion that possesses their soul so intirely, that they cannot entertain themselves with any other thought, and really believe that their felicity is bound up in the possession of the object of it, that they cannot ever be content without it, so that they dare undertake to vow they never shall or can have other sentiments, in whom the passion when they had their

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wishes, did not grow more quiet and not so opinionative, and find some allay so far that they were forc'd to seek to be reliev'd sometimes from their felicity by variety of divertisments, and inconstancy of appetites: if so, it were not so intolerable that men should think they might be satisfi'd here, & should not much consider any other. But 'tis not sufferable to set satisfactions that do either go out suddenly or clog & become wearisome, that either die or we distaste them, or else are not fit for them, against the satisfactions of being like God, whom there is no one ever did believe to be, but he assur'd himself he must be blessed for ever; a state which made Angels venture to be Devils rather than they would not strive for it, and might therefore well tempt David to resolve he would behold Gods face in righteousness, the sure means to attain that state, and my next particular.

The very same means are insinuated by St John in his first Epistle where he said, *we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*; add this, *Every man that hath this hope, purifieth himself as he is pure, doth righteousness*, in the words following, and so is righteous even as he is righteous. But that we may know what King David means by beholding Gods face in Righteousness, we must know that first by Righteousness is meant uprightness and sincerity of a religious, holy, virtuous life: and as for the beholding of Gods face, we may take notice that altho God saith he spoke to Moses face to face, yet he tells the same Moses that he cannot see his face and live, Exod. 33. 11, 10. so that Davids beholding of his face is not seeing him as he did hope to do, when he did awake up after Gods likeness, but

1. As for God to lift up the light of his countenance, Psalm 4. 6. and to make his face to shine upon a man Psalm 31. 16. is to be favorable to him; and to hide Psalm 30. 7. or turn away his face 2 Chron. 30. 9. is to withdraw his favor and to be displeased; so also to seek his face 1 Chron. 16. 11. is to endeavor to obtain his kindness, and accordingly to see or behold his face is to be in his favor, to be in a state of enjoying it. But besides this also

2. As those that are said to behold the face of Kings, are those that minister about them, do them service of the nearest admission, and that stand in their presence, and are ready still to execute whatever they command. So 2 King. 25. 19. and he took five men of those that saw the Kings face, of those that serv'd him in ordinary; and so very often Ester 1. 14. &c. And as secondly the Angels, that are ministering Spirits, sent forth by God to minister perpetually, are said to see the face of God always, Matt. 18. 10. so when David says of God, *thou settest me before thy face*, Psalm 41. 12. the Jews expound set me, that he might serve, minister unto him: for that is to stand before the face of one, 1 Kings 1. 2, 4. and c. 10. 8. and c. 17. 1. &c. as he had said, *do thou appoint me for thy service*; and by consequence to see his face or to behold his presence, is to wait upon him in all duty and obedience to his commands whom they attend: accordingly to walk before him, or walk with him in his presence, is to serve him constantly with all uprightness Gen. 17. 1. and to please him Heb. 11. 5. cum Gen. 5. 24. But particularly in the acts of Worship and Religion, his House, the place that's dedicated to his Wor-

ship being call'd his *Court*, his *presence* *Psalms* 95. 2. and 100. 2, 4. because he sat upon and spoke from the Mercy-seat *Exod.* 25. 22. *Numb.* 7. 89. and the Ark is therefore his *presence* and his *face*, those that serve there are said to *minister before him in his presence*, those that come there to *appear before him* *Psalms* 42. 2. those that pray, to *seek his face* *2 Chron.* 7. 14. and to *intreat the face of the Lord* *1 Kings* 13. 6. and our King David did desire one thing of the Lord, which, says he, *I will require, even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to behold the beauty of the Lord, Psalms* 27. 4. So that to behold God's face in righteousness here does signify all this, I will serve thee truly, faithfully attend thy commands, and wait upon thee in a constant diligent performance of my duty, live as always in thy presence holily and righteously, especially in attendance on thy Worship, when I come to seek thy face, to put my self before thee in thy presence; and so doing I make no doubt but that thou wilt lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and I shall behold thy face to shine upon thy servant.

And indeed that this is the means, and that there is no other way to arrive at this state, is not difficult to prove; for the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, saith the same David *Psalms* 11. 7. his countenance will behold the thing that is just, whereas ^v without this no man shall see the Lord; and thereupon the Prophet Micah after strict inquiry in the peoples name what they were to do that they might find God's face look pleasingly upon them, and see his favorable countenance, ^k wherewithall shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the most High God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams? If his favor be to be bought, tho at the greatest price, 'twill be advisable to give it: and the dearest purchase would be a reasonable one. Or shall I give ten thousand rivers of oyl, thereby to make his face to shine, and look upon me with a cheerful countenance? This sure were to be don. Or farther yet, shall I give my first-born for my transgression, or the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Time was indeed when men would do that; offer up their tender infants in the fire to Moloch to preserve themselves from those sins of the other Tophet, as if the burnt child were to expiate the foul heats that begat it. I know not whether men believe now such transgressions can deserve so severe atonements, that a sin of theirs is valuable at the life of their own first-born, tho they take upon them to profess the faith, that they were valued at the life of the first-born of God: however there our Prophet shapes this answer to that question, wherewithall shall I come before the Lord? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. And truly if we come before the Lord to behold his presence in the duties of Religion, we must see his face in Righteousness; otherwise he will either turn away his Face, or else our prayers will but call his frowns upon us, and indanger us to perish at the rebuke of his countenance. The Prophet Isaiah speaking as from God to that vainglorious nation of the Jews, saith *c. 1. v. 12, &c.* When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to tread my

v Heb. 12. 14.

k Micah 6. 6,
7, 8.

my courts? Bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination to me, it is iniquity, even your solemn meetings, Sabbath, and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea when ye make many prayers, I will not hear. Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, right the oppressed, &c. And surely if men do not put away the evil of their doings from them, when they come before his face, how lowd soever their petitions cry for mercy and remission, their crying sins will call as loud for vengeance: such Worship sure cannot possibly be grateful to him, we cannot think he will accept that which he nauseates, like that which his soul hates, and reward that which he cannot bear. Indeed such Worshippers do plainly rally him in praying to him. He that hath not faithfully endeavor'd to reform his manners, what does he in his confessions, but tell God Almighty solemnly that he is wicked, but in truth he shall continue so, as not at all as yet intending to be otherwise. He that begs God not to lead him into temptation, but goes on in impieties, minds not the keeping of himself out of the opportunities of it, but loves occasions, and converses with the provocations, plays upon the brink, does all that is to make it unavoidable for him to sin; mocks God in praying that he will not lead into temptation him that leads himself into it. What use were it to him God should hear his prayers, and not do that to him which he does to himself? Or if he beseech God to grant, for example, he may live a sober life, yet never purposing to fail one assignation, not resolving to abate one meeting nor one draught, he is so pleasant with Almighty God to wish, if he wish any thing when he is praying, that he may be as immoderate as ever, but that God would keep him sober, may have all the drink he went for, but not the drunkenness; this he desires God would preserve him from, and yet it may be not that neither, for that may be useful to him, but however for the rest let him do as he did. Now sure it is our interest God should not hear such prayers, and therefore tho in all our actions we had need be careful, since God is always present, yet we should especially in our Religious Worship; *semper enim presentamus & ostendimus nos quasi facie ad faciem cum Domino loquentes*, we present our selves to him, and speak face to face with him. Now if we lay not down our sins, but bring our crimes thither with our Devotions, and so make our very Worship an abomination, to present our provocations to himself and to his face, is such an affront that will not easily be pardon'd; no, if we will behold God's face, we must do it in Righteousness. Indeed the Psalmists joyning these in the expression does insinuate, that the onely hopefull means to make men be Religious, not at their Devotions onely, but in all their actions, to live holy, virtuous lives, is to live always as before God's face, *I will behold thy presence in Righteousness*. He that in every thing he goes about would teach himself the custom to look up, to behold God's face, and see his eyes over him, he would be careful that there should be no unrighteousness in what he did. King David was acquainted with the influence

influence of this, *Psalms 119. 168. I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies; for all my ways are before thee.* Indeed the presence of whatever person we had reverence for, to behold his face towards us inspecting our actions, would make us wary and fearful of a vanity or folly, much more of a gross action. *Martials Lucretia* blush'd, says he, laid his Epigrams aside when *Brutus* came in, *Brute, recede, leget,* but as soon as he was gon, she took them up and read them. Few vices hurry men with so impetuous a ferocity, but they can check themselves before a virtuous grave person. One of them that pretends to stings as sharp as any, would send off a boy, and tho it be as impudent a sin as any, cannot suffer a spectator: and then would I but consider always, I were always in God's presence, shut my eyes and see his face intent upon me, marking not my actions onely but my purposes and deliberations; I should start most certainly at the approaches of a sin, and no more dare to close with it, then a Cut-purse temted by an opportunity which he was going to make use of, would proceed if he discern'd the Judg upon the bench beheld him, saw his eye upon him watching him; 'tis such a guard this, nothing can be greater or securer. *I have set*
 * *Psalms 16. 8.* *God always before me,* says King * *David, therefore I shall not fall.* Nor would this contemplation onely make us cautious, but it would excite, encourage our devotions: if we saw our selves before him, we would be humble and attent, as people really concern'd, they would be full of reverence and godly fear; indeed we would be righteous, just and upright in all our doings; our whole conversation seeing who is present, would not dare to be unclean or rude, it would not be vain or uncomly; in fine the business of our life would be to do that which is well pleasing in his sight, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, always looking up to him whose face is towards us. This must needs raise all our affections and our aims, and place them upon him, on whom our eyes and thoughts are set, especially if there be resolution in the use of this means; most of all, if the resolution have the courage of King *David's* in the Text, a resolution which was taken up against the almost universal practice and the as great contradiction of the world, which generally minds far different satisfactions, *But as for me I will behold,* both which considerations of the resolution and the courage of it I shall joyn in my last particular.

And indeed there's nothing else but such a resolution that can set it self against the practice of the world, will serve our turns: for, as *Seneca* says, vice is but common madness, and we see that very oft against their temper, inclinations and their principles, and the conviction of their heart and soul, men will do vile and shamefull things, because they will be mad, if others be so; it seems so difficult a thing to endure to be singular in any company. And tho to be so, singular I mean, in any the advantages of this world, either as to goods of mind, of body, or of fortune for the most part is more valued far than the advantages themselves, we would inclose and be alone in every such thing, and as if we thought an excellency lost its vertue if another had it, 'tis the rarity that takes with every body; yet the advantages of Heaven, and the real true goods of the

the mind, Religion, Piety, and Virtue 'tis far otherwise, as to those there are none of those emulations in their practices and manners. Be the the consequence never so dreadfull, men will do and be as others; 'tis impossible to resist the tide of custom, go against the torrent of a croud and multitude, or bear the being singular. And there are two great obstructions to it, the solitude of singularity, and the censures, scoffings and disreputations that use to attend it. For example that I instance not, as well I might, in many of the great duties of our Christianity, which are scofft and ridicul'd, but in the very case that makes the opposition in the context here betwixt the Psalmist and the men of this world, their excessive, rich, full way of living. If I do not live up to the heights and vain pomps of condition or the mode, indeed tho my condition will not bear it, if I be not as expensive, as luxurious as others; I am then concluded sordid, near, short handed, sleighted by all those that do exceed me, and by all that judg by such appearances; so that here is disreputation lights upon me. And besides if I retrench, not superfluities alone, but all licentious conversation and the other evil uncomly entertainments of societies, retire out of them, allow my self none of these liberties, grow more severe than others, and consequently singular in my behavior; then I must keep company with no body, must withdraw from every meeting, be a Recluse, as if the world were but a Cloyster, or rather Hermitage: so that here's uncomfortable solitude attends this. 'Twere very sad if onely vicious conversation could cement societies or make acquaintances, and licentious folly sawce their meetings, give them relish. What comfort is there like to be in such companions that have nothing to endear themselves to one another, but that they will not refuse to sin, be sick or mad with one another? In truth it were no very eligible thing to be counted good, pleasant company, if to be so a man must hazard his sobriety or modesty, make bold with his Religion and good manners. Even common decency can scarce entertain without extravagance or detraction, either they must be ridiculous, or sharpe and bitter. Now it is ill to be engaged by reputation, to play the Satyrlist, or to play the fool, and have no other recompence or satisfaction but to make others laugh. But God be thanked 'tis not thus, but men that have some little latent affections to their sins or follies, still frame these objections against reformation of their evil customs; the age is not so vitiated, such ill conversation, unless it be by those that like and use it, is not every where to be found: but if it were, and so far as we meet it, *David's* resolution is most necessary. They may take their course; but as for me I will retire into God's presence, and *behold his face*. And what if by withdrawing thus I frequently deprive my self of the society that I was us'd to, & was friendly and delightfull to me? 'Tis better by denying my self and reforming to make joy in Heaven in God's presence among Angels, than assist in making sport with such men; and 'twill be but little comfort to go merrily and with good company to my damnation. Let them enjoy themselves in such society, but as for me I will seek other, will live always in God's presence, *I will behold his face*.

As to the other obstacle, the scoffs and the disreputations that are cast upon those that are singular on this account, comply not with the modes and evil customs of the age according as *S^t Peter* tells his Proselytes *1 Pet. 4. 3, 4. The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentile World, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings; wherein they think it strange, that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.* It cannot be deny'd but that the world do's put disreputation strangely upon things, and most unreasonably. Some virtues are the most reprochfull things that can be: a man can scarce live under the disparagement of being guilty of obeying God, and on the other side one of the greatest and most sinfull injuries in the whole world is, if not laudable, yet not blam'd in the man that does it, while the innocent sufferer of it is contemn'd, and is branded because he is wrong'd. Indeed if Christ's discipline were in force to censure every vicious person *ἡ ἀνθρώπων*, if every open contumacious Sinner were render'd as contemptible as a *Publican* was to the *Jews*, as *1* Christ left order; disreputation then would lie where it ought, and the objection would have no force. But as the world is, singularity in good things, and in not comporting with modes and customs, tho it may derive upon it self the scoffs of vain licentious men, cannot want esteem enough to bare it up against that. There is indeed no reputation like that of a discreet, well manag'd virtue; for many men that will not practise it, will yet commend it. For to pass the great things, and to name that which there is scarce any, that is, none sensible of, the instance which I made of this out of the context, where the Psalmist sets himself against the custom of those men, that pride themselves in ostentation of the plenties, and the gayeties, and the excess of this world; a mode which may be grown to such an height even in the lower ranks of people also, that they are so undervalued who comply not with it, that most cannot bear the shame of not having that which others have, tho their condition will not bear the charge of it, and this is almost universal. But be it so, yet they that do not see thy pomps like others, thy estate spangle, glare about thee and thy rooms and thy retinue, do not see it spilt about thy table; if they see thee live up to thy own condition, onely taking care not to exceed it, and resolving not to owe thy plenties to thy debts, that is, thy abundance to the needs of others, make their dues, their wants and nakedness to dress thy vanities; and if they see thee furnish those that need with what thou sparest: they cannot count this lower stricter sort of living Sordidness, but discreet, just, charitable Piety; & the others gaudiness proud lavishness, yea unjust, unchristian folly, which at last will fall, and that unpitied. But at once suppose to set our selves against the evil customs of the world and to be singular in duty should be likely to create us sleights and scoffs and disreputation; yet consider what

1 Matt. 18. 17. our Savior says *Whoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy Angels.* He couples these, and makes it the same guilt to be ashamed of him and of his words, ashamed of obedience to his word and ashamed

m Mark 8. 38.

asham'd of his person; to be afraid of, loath to do ones duty, because possibly some will speak meanly of it, is not onely not to dare to go to Heaven because some men laugh and scoff at those that do go thither, but 'tis reckon'd the same thing as to be asham'd of the Son of God who requir'd that duty, and think meanly of him, scorn to own that their elder Brother, God Almighty's First-born, as some do by their poor mean Relations: but this shame will be return'd severely, when the *Son shall come in the glory of his Father with the holy Angels*. And then compare the disreputes, to be asham'd of virtue, because debauchees that are as far from knowing what is true repute as they are from being virtuous, will think meanly of me for it, or to have the Son of God in glory with all his Host of Heaven think contemptibly of me, when I shall be asham'd so as to call out to the mountains and the hills to cover my confusion at the valley of *Jehoshaphat* before all the world. Let them delight, and satisfy themselves with their choice of their commendable vices; sins that are in reputation, rejoyce with glory in their shame; *But as for me I will behold thy face in Righteousness.*

And what remains but that we take up this resolution, and put on the courage of it, firmly purposing to do it, tho by doing so we should go against the general customs of the world. To make a resolv'd, open, avowed profession of a good life, provided that we do it without ostentation or hypocrisy, is a great advantage towards living so, makes it much easier. For however some, it may be the prime ministers of hell, Satan's cheifest agents in temptations, such as cannot bear that any other should be virtuous, 'tis such a reproch to them, will the more endeavor to betray such, 'tis their luxury; yet generally speaking, most men will not offer it, but rather fear them, having an aw of them, and will themselves avoid the doing ill before them in some measure. Indeed since none can promise themselves that such will comply with them if they tempt them, nor think it probable that they will; most men, however forward in assaulting innocence, will let them alone. Besides that such have put themselves, by having publickly profest, whatever the world does, they will live righteously, under a necessity of avoiding all their evil practices; and 'tis a happy and great advantage towards a good life, to be under a known obligation of well living, such as they themselves have taken on them out of perfect averfation to ill actions. Do not you think that most men miscarry out of want of that which resolution would be able to effect with its own strength? We see in other things it does attempt, it go's thro with much greater difficulties, than lie in the way to virtue; which is so known, so every day an object of mens eyes, that I should be asham'd to go about to prove it. But when this resolution secondly shall be taken up, and be avow'd against the open practice of the world out of a dislike and abhorrency to it; when it is made eager too by averfation, sharpened by much opposition and by being publickly profest and own'd as a peculiar concern, since the very shame of being foil'd in the contest, and proving false to ones own solemn resolution would have stings in point of honor to push it forwards, for to that shrine even Atheists are contented to pay homage: this must prosper, & unless

less men have a mind to be conquer'd, think it easier to retreat, and
fornidly desert their resolutions, they cannot fail. Especially thirdly
if men consider all this is manag'd in Gods presence, to his face; if
they set the Lord always before them as the object and the end of all
their resolutions and their actions, and do this with all sincerity, as
seeing his eyes over them as witness and judg of their behavior, and
behold his face too with all hope and confidence imaginable, know-
ing he looks over them to encourage their endeavors, to behold their
needs of help, and to give them grace sufficient, and to crown their
fidelity, then such resolutions cannot possibly miscarry. What suc-
cess soever they may have in that war which the world here, that is
at enmity with all that love and serve God, wages with them, and
tho it do not onely frown on them, but humble them into the dust
of death, yet keeping firm to their resolutions of *beholding Gods face
in Righteousness*, when they awake out of that dust *after his likeness*,
they shall be satisfied with it.

SER-

S E R M O N

XII.

OF CHRISTS BEING

LORD and GOD.

John 20. 28.

My Lord and my God.



THAT which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, declare we unto you, saith St John Epist. I. c. I. v. I. And truly these same senses did declare to Thomas the richest Article of the Christian Faith, the Resurrection, and helped him to conclude, that Christ was therefore *Lord and God*. For when he had beheld Christ's hands, and thrust his own hands into his side, he answered and said, *My Lord and my God*. We have another sense comes in to evidence, and makes the application; we have this day not only seen and handled, but also tasted the Bread, that is, this Lord; and if we have received it worthily, and being become one with him we may upon our own most sure and close experience cry out, *My Lord and my God*.

The Text, you see answers both the Solemnities of the day. The Resurrection evidenced him to be *Lord and God* to Thomas, and so also to us; and our faithful receiving him will evidence him to be our *Lord* and our *God*, and in order to both these I shall handle them: for there be in the words these parts.

1. A Compellation given to Christ upon his appearance at his being risen, *Lord and God*.

2. The Relation of these applied, *My Lord and my God*. I shall shew

1. That the Resurrection did install him to that title *Lord*.

2. Shew what that title does import,

1. By way of requiring, what kind of relation it hath to respect and homage.

2. By way of promise, what it holds out for hope. Then as to a word of application I will shew how the Sacrament applies both those importances.

1. How it is an assurance to perform what that title requires.

2. How it does confer what the title does promise.

To the first, that the Resurrection did instal Christ to the Title *Lord*. As Christ was God he had indeed all Power and Authority from everlasting; that comes not under our consideration. But as he was the person sent and commissioned by God to bring mankind to Salvation; he was first to die for them, then to rule over them; and first to be their Priest, and then their Lord. After his crucifying when he was risen again, then he says *All power is given to me both in heaven and earth*, Matt. 28. 18. or in more exprefs words *Acts 2. 36. Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom they have crucified, both Lord and Christ*. His Cross was a step to his Throne, it merited that Authority for him, and was in part undertaken for it *Phil. 2. 8, 9*. And then for the importance of this Title as to that it does require is very obvious, *Lord* is a word of power and authority, it requires service and obedience. Nothing more frequent in the Prophets, than, when they have from God severely worded their commands, to add this sanction, *I am the Lord*: and as applied to Christ *S^t Paul* does say, *I serve the Lord Christ*. A servant is the necessary relative to a Lord, and truly doing what he doth command was the use he assigned of all that power he had given him, *teaching them to observe whatever I have commanded*. And truly if those Scriptures be remembred which secure his Authority thus, let us know that Power was the reward of his sufferings, and he endured them partly for the Title's sake; therefore says as much, and *Heb. 12. 2. For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God*; did all this, that he might gain that place: or if that be not plain enough, then this is most exprefs *Rom. 14. 9. For to this end Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living*. Verse 8. *That whether we live, we live unto the Lord: and whether we die, we die unto the Lord*: that is, that both our life might be consecrated to him, our lives spent on his service, and our deaths be at his command; and this was part of the end of his death. And then I appeal to your own hearts, for what end, think you, he did so desire, and obtain this power? Do you think, when he was set at the right hand of God, he was exalted onely to a name, that by all those sufferings he did acquire but a bare title, to be call'd *Lord of Lords*, as he is call'd *Rev. 19. 16*. but neither to look after our obedience, nor indeed to set us any law to obey, as some would have it? Was this power so dear to him, as that he would suffer all those torments to compass it, and yet when he hath it, that it should be so little regarded by him, as to suffer us to neglect & contemn it, to go on in a continued course of disobedience to all his precepts, to rebel against his Power, & never submit our appetites to it, but let every lording passion fly in his face, & every lust defy his Authority, let us be proud against that Lord, be higher than our duties and all the temper of virtues, and let every ebullition of our proud wrath trample on a statute back'd with hell-fire, yea and so believe that his death should procure us an impunity in doing this? What a wretched mistake is this, to think his blood, which purchased him a power to command us, should purchase us a leave to disobey him?

This

This is to make Christ's blood divided against it self, and to make it spill and dash it self. That we should go on in a course of iniquity, or allow our selves some peevish vices, and stop our own consciences and a Preacher's mouth with saying Christ died for us, when as 'tis clear he died that he might be Lord, that is, that we might live and dy to him, do both at his command; and canst thou think that that death will excuse thee for not obeying, which was undertaken for that very end, that thou mightest obey him? Christ died to be thy Lord, and thou wilt have that death a plea for thee, when thou obeyest sin and the Devil his greatest Enimies. His Cross was his very Ensign and Standard against these Enimies, his Passion was his grappling with them, and his death his Victory. And yet thou dost again submit to their authority, becomest a subject to their power, and settest them Lord over thee, and fetchest the justification of this thy defection from that death and victory; and that is the same thing as to make them of no authority nor power, yea the captivity and ruin of those Enimies to be the reason of thy obeying them, to excuse thy disservice to Christ by saying he is thy Lord, and for thy rebellion and waging war with him pretend thou dost it under his own standard. No certainly his Title claims Obedience, and does assure thee thou must serve. This is the first thing what thou must do.

The second what thou maist expect from it, is easily discover'd, that is wages: For *he will recompence every man according to his deeds, Rom. 2. 6. To them, who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life, v. 7. And glory, honor, and peace to every man that doth good, v. 10.* For he is the Lord of glory, the Prince of peace, and Lord of life, the Scripture saith: in a word to sum up both what his Title doth require, and what we may expect from it, it saith Service and it saith Wages, and both are set down in that to the *Heb. 5. 9. He is the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him;* and both here are applied to him who does in earnest owne the relation to this Title, and can say in truth *My Lord:* the next part, and first of the applying what it does require, Service, as it is the assuring of performance.

My Lord. And truly had we not entred any voluntary obligation, and had we not contracted formally to take him for our Lord, and not onely owned all that the relation does import to be due from us, but engaged also to render it; yet he is to us both

1. By an Original right: he made us, and there is not a workman in the world hath so much right to require the uses of his own handy-work, to dispose of that same utensil which himself shap'd or fram'd, as the Lord hath to require our service. Did I perchance furnish the Lord with some materials for my self, or did I find any piece towards my making, contribute any least thing to my being, then let me claim something for my share in my self, and by the rule of fellowship with God have some use of my self to my self, and as to that let him not be my Lord. But there is no such thing; he called me into being out of the infinite resistance of vacuity, and nothing. He gave me body, soul, and every power and faculty, and he upholds every motion and inclination of those faculties,

and

and gives me opportunities and objects for them. There is no considerability of any thing within me is from my self, but entirely owes its being from his store, and comes from the Almighty: and then what least imaginable pretence or plea can I have, why every motion and inclination both of soul and body should not be bound to look towards his service, and every action and thought acknowledge him *My Lord*. And

2. By purchased Title. He did redeem us from the service of those cruel Lords, Sin and the Devil, whose service is unreasonable and unmanly slavery, and whose wages is eternal ruin; and he bought the right and title to our service at a price, he became our Lord, *Ye are bought with a price*, 1 Cor. 7. 23. They that do not acknowledge this, are in the number of those men of whom *S^t Peter* speaks *Epist. 2. c. 2. v. 1. denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction*: and you may judge what kind of Lord he ought to be by the price he paid for the Title, what service he expected by the rates at which he purchased them, even at the blood of God *Acts* 20. 28. He died, I told you, that he might be Lord. And now Lord, what is thy servant that thou shouldst thus value him, or what are his performances that thou shouldst buy them at these rates? And shall I give to Sin or Sathan those services, which he thus values, and thus buys? No, if thou art content to purchase that so dear which was thy own just due before, surely now by all rights thou art *My Lord*. But

3. He is so also by my own most solemn contract and engagement. And to pass by all the rest, and to stick to that of this day onely, we did contract so in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and in receiving that we did most solemnly assume to do him faithful service, and took him for our Lord. And this would easily appear from hence, if Christ's blood be the price with which he bought the right to be thy Lord, and this day thou didst come and here didst take that blood to all those ends and uses it was given for, then in so doing thou didst ratify the contract, and take possession of the relation: but to do it more solemnly, and here I will not stand upon that proof which I have formerly made to you from the account that *Pliny* gave to *Trajan* the persecuting Emperor, tho' truly it be strange that a Heathen should discern this was the meaning of their Sacrament, and Christians will not believe it. He, when he was employed to persecute the Christians, tells him what he had found of them by racking some, and by confessions of others at their death, *Soliti stato die convenire, seque Sacramento obstringere, ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, &c.* to take an oath (they knew no other sense of the word Sacrament) to do what their Lord had commanded them. What have you don this day? Why Christ was sworn your Lord this day, and you have taken an oath of service, entered into a bond of duty and obedience; and if you wilfully shall fail of doing this, your Worships will be brought against you, your Communion will come in as so many evidences that you have forfeited, so many oaths that you have broken. No sure, I will henceforwards tie my self to better performance; for I have hamper'd my self with obligations, entangled my self with
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one other engagement, I have again sworn at the Altar, Thou art my Lord. But I have a more solemn proof of this, that he who comes to the renewing of a Covenant with God (now Christ we know saith ^a that that *cup is the new Covenant in his blood*) he does ^a Luke 22.20. enter into an oath of God, Deut. 29. from verse 10. to 15. *Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God, your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the beaver of thy wood, unto the drawer of thy water, that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day; that he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob: neither with you onely do I make this covenant and this oath, but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day.* Now out of this they who are not convinc'd that our first entring Covenant with God by Baptism is a vow, altho the Church require that we should look upon it under that Solemnity, and tho *S^t Peter* call it *impromissum* a stipulation, or if they think it something like it, yet 'tis a vow but in the childrens name, and so it does not strike those apprehensions of so sacred an engagement into them, themselves may see here at an entring Covenant little ones entring into an oath: and this was not the first giving of the Covenant, that so any thing might be thought peculiar to that, but onely a repeting of the Covenant in their presence, verse 1. and least that we should think their standing there in solemn manner, might imply something more than ordinary verse 14. 15. take us that stand here this day before the Lord our God, but also with him that shall be born hereafter. Many expositors, and the *Jerusalem Exposition* says with all the generations of you that are to come *כאלו קימין הכה* כל הון הינון קימין הכה, as if they stood with us this day. And the *Targum of Jon. Uzziel* says, they do stand, that is, as to this intent and purpose, that as soon as they are admitted into Covenant by Circumcision, they are within this oath. Little ones therefore that can be admitted into a Covenant by receiving of the sign of it, they then enter an oath of keeping it. And then, my Brethren, we have entred an oath to continue Christ's faithful Soldiers and Servants unto our lives end, and that is, thou, and I, and every one have sworn he is my Lord. O my Savior I was baptized, and at that time did swear service, and then if I should fail thee now, I renounce my Allegiance, I go from my fealty, and I throw of my Covenant. Every evil action I deliberately commit, brands me with the dishonorable base stile of one that flights his oaths; there is no hold of his vows, not his most sacred ones; those that he makes to God. Every vain or passionate oath, how true soever, speaks me perjured; the draughts of intemperance would wash off the water of my Christendom; every unclean lust, every impurity of Flesh or Spirit does as it were bemire and wipe out my contract with my Lord. For I covenanted to be pure and clean, for I was wash'd into the very name of his retainer. I could not have that

title of that relation without being cleansed. There I did swear defiance against all his Enemies, the Devil, World, and Flesh, and all worldly and carnal lusts, that I would neither follow nor be led by them; and if I should serve them now, I should be a Rebel and a Traitor to my Lord against my bond, and covenant, and oath. No, my Lord, I will not serve these, where death must be my wages, the Fiends my Comrades, and my Conquest Hell; I'll not do homage to destruction, engage to be true and faithful to my own ruin, pay allegiance to my perdition. Thou hast my worship and my service by bargain and by oath, I have sworn Thou art my Lord. Now all this is of much more force in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, where I do formally and knowingly seal to this Covenant; and when we do this on our knees in the most solemn manner that is possible, this must needs be a more expressing into Christ's oath, than that there of the Jews was the entering God's oath, which was in probability onely coming and standing before the Lord to hear the Covenant, which God had struck with that nation before in *Horeb*. Or if it were performed with Sacrifice, which may seem probable in that it is express'd לעבך, that thou shouldest pass into the covenant. So your Margent reads there verse the 12. alluding to their manner of confirming Covenants by dividing the beasts, and setting one half against the other, and passing betwixt the divisions: so we see Jer. 34. 18. This is passing into the Covenant, and therefore the LXX. read here Deut. 29. 12. That thou shouldest enter into the Covenant of the Lord thy God, ἀπαῖς αὐτῶ ἵνα κτεῖος ὁ Θεός σε ἀγαθήσεται ὡς καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι, that rite of dividing and passing thro being onely the Symbol of curses against them that shall break their Covenant, and imprecations in Hieroglyphicks: so that in Jer. 34. 18. 'tis most literally, if we translate the words עני נא according to their importance, I will make those men, that have transgressed my Covenant, the calf, or as the calf, as the Syriac reads; I will divide and separate them among the Nations, and give them to the sword, and cut them in pieces, the ceremony signifying to be don to him that does not stand to his Covenant. Now surely this is don to more advantage in the Sacrament, where Christ's body is torn, and his blood poured out no doubt with the like commination implied, that being the very meaning of pouring out blood in Covenants; so that we entred there the Lord's Covenant and imprecation, swearing that he shall be our Lord with a most threatening sense. And surely if we be not careful to observe our oath, we have vow'd agonies to our selves, and sworn our own condemnation, when there I curse my self with all the curses of the Covenant, if Christ be not my Lord.

And now it will be needles for me to go on and prove, that if we be not careful to fulfil the importance of this relation, *my Lord*, in order to what it requires, 'twill be in vain to expect the benefit of that relation, in what it does import. He that hath not don service as to his Lord, must not look ^b *to enter into the joys of his Lord*: he that hath not don his will, 'twill be in vain for him to cry at the last day *Lord Lord*, altho he come with never so applying Titles, and cry *my Lord*, and tho he call upon any other Title of his *Jesus*.

6 Matt. 25. 21.

He died indeed for our sins, but he rose again for our justification. His Resurrection did entitle him to be our Lord. If he be risen to thee, he is thy Lord. But these two make up the confession of a Christian *Rom. 10. 9. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved:* and look not for it from any other relation to him. Thy Priest may sacrifice for thee, but Christ thy Lord must pardon thee: thy Jesus on the Cross must pay thy ransom, but if *the Lord make you free, then are ye free indeed, John 8. 36.* Do not deceive thy self with looking no farther than to thy Jesus in his sufferings; thou must relate to him also in his Power and Authority, thou must depend upon thy Jesus dying and risen too; not onely on thy Jesus on the Cross, but on thy Jesus on the Throne: thou must cry out My Savior, and thou must cry My Lord; and if thou canst in truth and in reality, he is the *Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him;* that is, he is an everlasting Savior to them, to whom he is a Lord. His all Authority will be employed in thy deliverance, he will shew himself a Lord to thee onely in pardoning, saving and rewarding thee, and his all-power both in Heaven and Earth will be to thee Omnipotence of mercy: for he that is thy Lord, he is thy God also. The third thing, *My God.*

I must take the same method here that I us'd before. First see what the Resurrection did contribute towards this Title *God*, and what that Title does imply, both as to what it doth require, and as to what it imports by way of promise and encouragement.

Secondly see what the Sacrament contributed towards making the application, *My God*, and what that imports in order to both the other things.

1. Altho this Son of God according to his Divine Nature was Everlasting God, and, as the *Nicene Creed* expresses, *begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,* and was called so in Scripture *John 1. 1. and the Word was God;* yet it is sure this person Jesus Christ was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, *Rom: 1. 4.* And this text is the first place in the New Testament, where this person is expressly called God. Thomas upon the evidence of this Resurrection crying out, I do acknowledge that thou art my very Lord, and that is a most certain argument to me that thou art the Omnipotent God of Heaven; and this his Resurrection did contribute to his Title *God.* Now I enquire what this implies, and that will be made clear from *Deut. 26. 16, 17, 18, 19. This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes and his commandments and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voyce. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments: And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor, and that thou maiest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken.* So that you have there the certain meaning of that mutual relation

My God and My People as to what it requires: and so we see 'tis but the same engagement that the other Title did import, onely with an higher inforcement and ground of obligation; and therefore God himself that by his Prophet *Malachy c. 1.* had used the other argument of Master or Lord עֲבָד אֱלֹהֶיךָ *Malachy v. 6.* and Governor *v. 8.* *Offer it now unto thy Governor, will he be pleased with thee or accept thy person?* makes use of the like climax and gradation: as if he had said, Had thy obedience to thy Ruler no more care nor endeavor in it, had thy services to thy Lord no more devotion nor zeal, were thy performances to thy Governor so slight and so regardless, so full of supine negligence, to say nothing of transgression and contempt; were thy presentments to thy Prince so unhandsom, slubber'd & heedless, so unchosen, unprepared & so trivial, would they be content with them? And must I? No surely, *Cursed be the deceiver* verse 14. that mocks me with his imperfect, lame, sick services, with outsidings of attendance, yea with irreverence, with casting of my words behind him, with polluted offerings; *for I am a great King, saith the Lord.* But afterwards in case of an higher affront he breaks into an higher resentment *c. 3. 8.* *Will a man rob God?* This is such a thing as the Lord's Rhetoric could lay no greater aggravation on it, than by asking the question, whether any man could heat himself into such a mad impiety, and not be confounded at the thought of such an enterprise, to abuse his God. Now such an obligation of obedience to the Lord Christ he owns, that does acknowledge him his God, this it requires.

Now as to what the Title does import by way of promise; here to be the God of any body signifies to be their Almighty Benefactor, him from whom that person may expect, and shall receive all good things, that the power of a God includes. So it is clear it does, when God proclaims himself the *God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, and says, *that is his name and his memorial to all generations, Exod. 3. 15, 16.* From whence our Savior concludes *Matt. 22. 31, 32.* that *Abraham* and the other must have a life after this; for otherwise how is he yet their God? How can he be a Benefactor to the dead? And in the tenor of the Covenant, where it is past, it means, I will bestow upon them all the mercies of the Covenant. So in the Old, that place of *Deut. 26. 16, 17, 18, 19.* so in the New *Heb. 8. 10, 12.* where 'tis explained, *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more,* So that *my God* does mean, first he that I vow all worship and service to, and secondly he from whom I claim and challenge all those glorious things that are contracted for us in Christ's Covenant, the happy issues of the whole chain of methods that he works for us, the designed mercies of his Predestination and the privileges that he calls us to, the comfortable condition in which his Justification does instate us, the graces of his Sanctification, and the incomprehensible blessedness of his Glorification: yea and all the preservations and mercies of this life, all these are challenged in this, *Thou art my God.* For so *Jer. 31. 33, 34.* which is repeated in the *Heb. 8. 10, 11, 12.* whatever both parts do contract for, man's duty

duty and God's promises, is all sum'd up in this, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* By which words also he assures them all deliverances from evil, and enstates upon them the securings of his Providence, both to themselves and their posterity. And if God mean all this, when he does say *I will be their God*; then man he vows and claims all this, when he does say *my God*.

Now let us see how this days performance does both these. First how it vows and swears all duty, worship, and service, all that Christ requires by his Covenant, I have already shewn, so that that part is don; onely we may take notice *Whose belly is his God*, in S^t Pauls words *Phil. 3. 19.* the man who does mind nothing but his sensual appetites; and notwithstanding Christ's commands contrives all satisfactions for that, and enjoys them: that either casts the body of Christ into a stomach filled with late surfeit and drowns his blood in such intemperate draughts as are yet unrepented of, or else within a few days after overlays that body with some riot, or spews that blood out in the overflowings of his woful draughts. These whatsoever they have don to day, cannot yet say, *my God*; not onely because they so defy his Worship which they vowed, but because they set up an Anti-God against him, and while they vow upon their knees he is their God, yet at that same time they adore their appetites. Nor if *Covetousness*, or rather inordinate lusting, as the word bears, *be Idolatry*, as S^t Paul oft expresses, and surely without taking in the Heathen uncleannesses in Religion: and it is ill for some persons of these days, that they had not the luck to be born Heathens, that so they might have bin unclean devoutly, committed in obedience to their Gods, presented their bodies living sacrifices to be kindled by the flames of lust, and whose whoredoms were their pieties; for many live now, as if they did not onely wish, but almost think so. But abating this, there is sure more Idolatry in the courtships and the practice of that sin than any other. There is no other thing does cast a man into such base degenerate and unworthy submissions to achieve or to cover his transgression, lower than any thing but the unclean commission it self. Now if this be Idolatry, the lustful person hath an Idol, and then he cannot say to Christ *my God*. And thus they *in whom the God of this world hath blinded their mind*, in S^t Pauls words *2 Cor. 4. 4.* they who serve Satan by going on in any vicious custom of the World; or in a word, they that disobey Christ for this God of the World, *this Prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that works in the Children of disobedience*, *Ephes. 2. 2.* they cannot say to Christ *my God*; tho they bow at his Altar, they obey the Devil, and he will not be a partner together with the Devil. So that every one of these is perjur'd, when he says *my God*; much less can he plead the claim, *my God*, the last sense.

Now in that sense *My God* does challenge as a right and a peculiar all the Blessings temporal, Spiritual and Eternal, all that the promises of Christ do offer, or that the hopes and expectations of a Christian fly at: all these, I told you, God included, when he said *I will be their God*; and therefore all these he does truly challenge, that can say *my God*. It is an huge Confidence that a poor soul may take, when he can go to God as David does *Psalms 119. 94. I am thine,*

thine, *save me*; secure thine own, O Lord, or else it will be thy loss what I shall suffer. For I am thine, vindicate thine own right, let neither Sin nor Devil rob thee of thy own peculiar. Behold I commit thine own charge with thee, and then take care of that. Shall that miscarry that is a part of thy custody and care, a part of thy possession and inheritance; for all this is implied in that challenge, *my God*. For they whose God he is, they are his People, that is the correlation. Now that means a *special People*, Deut. 7. 6. *a peculiar People*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *a peculiar Treasure*, Exod. 19. 5. *his People of inheritance*, Deut. 4. 20. *his Jewels*, Mal. 3. 17. *the Jewels of his Crown*, Zach. 9. 16. If I am his, I am so under all these precious notions, and then how dear, how valuable am I to my God, who make up his inheritance, who do enrich his treasury, who give a lustre to his Diadem of glory, and am a Jewel in his Crown? How secure may I be? For will God wretchlessly lose his inheritance, or will he not take care of his especial things, or will he throw away his treasure, or will he throw his own Crown to the ground so to dash off the Jewels of it? That place of *Malachy* expresses the different condition of those that are God's People from the others that have no relation to him, in respect of God's carings and protection, Mal. 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. *Ye have said, it is in vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts? And now we call the proud happy: yea they that work wickedness are set up; yea they that tempt God are even delivered. Then they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.* In times of undisturbed abundance and of full prosperity, when the God of this World is good to them that serve him, when the Lord lets men alone, and the ungodly thrive; then indeed his protections are not much regarded, but wickedness and wealth do seem the strong securities. But when God sends his indignation abroad, and when his judgments sweep away those confidences, then this will be a comfortable consideration: Come what will come, I have one that will care for me, one that hath writ me in his note book, his book of remembrance to put him in mind, that he is to provide for me: and when the most flourishing ungodly man shall be stript of all his hopes and trusts, so that there remains no least relief from them, nor can he look for any from the Lord, he is not of his People; then have I one that will make me up amongst his Jewels, have the same care of me as of his precious and peculiar treasures; I have a right and title to his protections, to provide for, and to take care of me: it is his office, he undertook it in his Covenant, and not to do it were to break his compact which he hath bound himself to with an oath. For I am his, therefore I can with confidence go to him. *I am thine, save me*. Therefore the words afford me greater grounds of confidence, when they give

give me authority to challenge him, and tell him, Thou art mine, *my God*. All the securities that his preserving mercies signify, all the watches of his providence, all the blessings that fulfil his Attributes, as goodness, they are all mine, for he is mine. Can I fear the malice of Adversaries? shall I doubt the fury of that spoiler that even robs necessity, will rob me even to a perfect desolation? Ah my poor soul, *Nunquid sibi Christianum*. I am sure it cannot take all from me; it must void Heaven before it can disfurnish me of all, it must commit a rape upon my Jesus; for while they leave him, I have my God. Can I want any thing for this life or the life to come, if there be a supply in Christ? I may be sure to have it, if his Divinity can effect it; I need not want, for I have right to him, he is *my God*. What one thought can afflict or trouble me long, unless it be such an one, for which there is no help for in God? If such a one indeed do seize me, there is danger; but till that happen *why art thou so troubled, O my soul, why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God*, in Christ, for he is *my God*. Can I desire indeed, when I have him? Sure I am strangely greedy, if the Almighty be not enough for me, more unsatisfied than Hell if Christ, that is God, cannot suffice me, if I am not content when he is *my God*. O my soul, Christ never failed to pay his debts, he is a happy Creditor to whom he owes, especially where he owes that debt, and where he owes himself. Now if thou be a faithful and Religious Soul, he is thy debt, as due to thee as thy own portion. *Thou art my portion, O Lord*, saith David; thou hast as great a right to him as thy inheritance: *Thou art the lot of my inheritance*, saith he again, as St Thomas here *He is my God*.

c Psalm 42. 5.

d Psalm 119.

e Psalm 16. 5.

But never hath a faithful Soul more right to lay this claim than at the Sacrament to both the claims that I have treated of.

1. To be his Treasure, his peculiar Treasure; for the Church tells us, *If with a penitent and true heart we receive that holy Sacrament, then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood, then we dwell in him and Christ in us, we be one with Christ and Christ with us*; an Union which fulfils what Christ hath praised for John 17. 21, 23. *In them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one with us*. Here's Unions and interests enough, and all cemented and assured by the worthy receiving of this Sacrament. I am certainly his, if I be made one with him, and dearer than his Jewels, and more peculiar to him than his Treasure; for I am him himself. And the same thing will prove that he is mine; for certainly if I have a title to him ascertain'd, if I be made one with him, I may well call that mine to which I am united. So when he dwells and is in me, then I may say He is my Christ, *my God*. And then, he that there faithfully performs worship and service to him, and so does take him for his God, then if his God be his inheritance, there he does make his entry: if his God be his portion, there he receives his portion. The Priest there gave thee, if thou wast a good Communicant, the Body and Blood of Christ, and his Body and his Blood is he himself. Therefore thou didst receive him as verily as thou didst those, and if the Sacramental food be thine, then Christ is thine, and thou maist say *my God*.

My

My Brethren it was the Blood of Christ that purchased all the glorious mercies of the Gospel, all the blessed expectations of a Christian; that was the price of all the joys of Heaven, that reconciled God to us, bought us an interest in him, and the happy enjoyments of himself for us: and then if in the Sacrament Christ do give me his blood, when I can shew God that, bring him the price of the remission of my sins, the value of those glories, even the blood of Jesus, come with the purchase-money in my hands that bought my interest in God, cannot I say those are mine, my Heaven and *my God*? Yea when I can say, O Lord Christ, whom I have undertaken to obey, my God whom I have vowed to serve and worship, thou art even my flesh; for there I ate thy flesh, and thou becamest flesh of my flesh: *Thou art the portion of my cup*, when thy very blood doth fill full my cup, and so thou art my flesh and my blood, then surely I may say with *Thomas* here *my Lord and my God*.

O Holy and Eternal Savior, who art made both Lord and Christ, and by thy Resurrection didst manifest the Omnipotency of thy person, the truth of thy Promises, and open a way to the everlasting glory and salvation, which thou hast prepared for them that give themselves up to serve and worship thee their Lord and God; pour down that blessed influence of this thy Resurrection on our hearts, in raising us from the death of sin to the life of Righteousness. Be thou our Lord and Christ, ruling us by thy laws, saving us by thy grace, and by thy Spirit applying the mercies of thy death, and so making us partakers of thy Resurrection; therein turning us from our iniquities, hereafter in raising us to Glory. O Lord we have this day made a Covenant of this with thee, and signed the Articles of it in the blood of our God, swore to them at the Altar: give us grace, we beseech thee, to use the strictest care and watchfulness in our endeavors to perform with thee. Regard not how we have in times past onely mock'd thee sacredly in these performances. O let it from this day be otherwise. We have bin onely on a stage of Religion, when we are at our devoutest performances; and having turn'd our backs unto the Church, turn'd them also to our duty, put off the vizards of Religion, and we untired our selves of all our Piety almost as soon as the exercises of it were don; and howsoever we tied our selves, our froward wills have bin too strong for all our obligations, and burst out of them, broke all thy bonds asunder, and cast away thy cords from us: altho we tied them with all things that were most solemn and most sacred, vows and oaths, and tied them before the body of our crucified Lord and Savior, with the body and blood of Christ in our hands, as if we had no other desires, no other cares that should do us good, than as we were careful to keep those resolutions and vows; and yet, O Lord, we did let them instantly loosen and slack, pass by and fail. Yea we did break them wilfully, and would not be held in by thine or our own bonds. O Lord, if thou look upon us in this guilt, sure thou wilt have no more to do with us, such false and perjured vow-breakers. But O look upon us in thine own blood, which thou hast bid us pour out still to establish and renew our Covenant with thee; and let this Covenant, wherein we have now
taken

taken thee to be our Lord and God, and taken thee who art so in us, remain inviolable: be there then with thy Power and Authority, subdue our hearts and our desires, and bring them under the obedience of thy laws. Thou that art God Almighty, that didst conquer Death and Satan, bring it to pass that none of them prevail against thee now in our Souls, where thou art: but use thy strength, O Lord, to drive their power thence, that thy servants and thy people may not be enslaved to corruption and ruin, nor thy Enemy gain souls from thee, which thou hast purchased with thy blood, that we having attain'd thee for our Lord and God, may claim the privileges of thy People here, have the watches, and cares, and securities that thou laiest out upon thy Treasures and the Jewels of thy Crown; and by thy body and thy blood being made one with thee, and thou being ours, all things may be ours, thy grace here and thy joys hereafter; thy Spirit may be ours, and thy Heaven ours; and we in thee and thou in us, may all enjoy thy Kingdom, Power and Glory for ever.

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S E R M O N

XIII.

THE BELIEVERS CONCERN

to pray for Faith.

Mark 9. 24.

Lord, I believe, help thou my Unbelief.

WHICH are the words of a poor parent passionately earnest and afflicted sadly for his child, that from his infancy had bin tormented miserably by a Devil, for which having sought help every way, but finding none, no not from Christ's Disciples, at last he repairs to him himself, beseeching him to have compassion on him, and if he were able to relieve him. To whom Christ replies that if he could believe, then he could work the miracle, and help his child, all things being possible to be don for him that could believe, but nothing otherwise; whereupon strait way the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.*

In which words we have, first the necessary Qualification that is to make all that had ever heard of Christ capable of having any benefit from Christ, that is belief in him, *I believe.* And since Christ hath made this qualification absolutely necessary, and by consequence must be suppos'd to have provided means sufficient to work in us that belief that he requires so peremptorily, we shall then

In the second place enquire how it comes to pass that they so often fail; that men do either not believe, or their Faith is so weak that much unbelief do's mix with it, as in our Confessor here in the Text, who tho he did profess he did believe, yet withal acknowledges his unbelief.

And thirdly to prevent and remedy all that, here is discovered whither we are to betake our selves for help, and where alone 'tis possible to find it, and that is Christ himself, who alone is able to repair in us whatever degree of true belief is wanting in us, *Lord help thou my unbelief,* and how he do's repair it.

And fourthly when it is repair'd to that due height, what that degree is can make us capable of those benefits which he hath promis'd to bestow on true Believers; and whether such believers can say with our man here, *I believe,* yet say too, *Help my unbelief.*

First

First of the first, the qualification *believe*; which is absolutely necessary to make men capable of any benefits from Christ. For in all benefits of this kind the Text mentions, such as were to come by miracle, 'tis well known what *S^t Matthew* says of *Nazareth*, his own country, that *he did not many mighty works, there because of their unbelief*, c. 13. 58. *S^t Mark* expresses it, that *he could there do no mighty work*, c. 6. 5. that is, he could not be inclined to work them, so as that he could or would be willing to do any, *saving that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them*. For tho' signs are not, as *S^t Paul* says, for believers, but for them that believe not, 1 Cor. 14. 22. so that infidelity seems rather prerequir'd to them than belief, since they are don on purpose to convince & work men to the Faith, on which account some were always wrought first where he was not known, to raise mens opinions and expectations concerning him which if they were heeded, so that they did work some but beginnings of Belief, heus'd to add more to encrease that Faith and confirm it. But where the first Essays were ineffectual, and got no credit, there he did forbear; for such render'd themselves unworthy of them altogether, Miracles were lost upon them, not attaining that end which they were intended for: which was not for compassion to their sick to to heal, or their dead to raise them, for then, as *S^t Chrysostome* observes, he would have cur'd or rais'd them all; but was for their Conviction, to make faith of the Divinity of his Person and Doctrine, and prevail with them to give themselves up to him, as to the *Messiah*: and therefore all those who by the knowledg or the fame of his great works were drawn to come to him for help, he still requires profession of the faith they had concerning him, and just according to the measures of that faith so he dispenses aid. Thus *Matt.* 9. 28. the blind men that cried after him and followed him for sight, he asks, *believe ye that I am able to do this?* and when they affirm'd, *yea Lord*, he yeilds no more but this, *according to your faith be it unto you*, v. 29. But when the *Canaanitish* woman did believe even to importunacy and trouble, and her faith was such as would neither be shaken nor receive repulse, but was full proof against Christ's arguments and his seeming reproches, yea made use of his upbraidings, urg'd them to her own advantage, and in spight of all resistance persever'd, Christ could not then contain, but cried, *O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, *Matt.* 15. 28. And on the other side, as while *Peter's* courage seeing Christ his master walking towards them upon the water made him desire to meet him on the water too, accordingly it suited: while he did resolutely obey his Master and rely on his assistance that commanded him, he was sustain'd, that confidence did buoy him up: but when a turbulent strong wind once shook his faith, when he began to fear and then to doubt, immediatly he sunk, *Matt.* 14. 30. And all the reason in the world, that when he doubted whether Christ would or were able to uphold him in obeying him, tho' he had present experiment of both, he should be then left to himself, when in the height of the success and the securities of miracles he was afraid and stagger'd: since 'twas the whole design of miracles, and by consequence of that, to work faith, and it is the very essence

also of faith to assure us of God's power and his readines to perform whatever he hath promis'd howsoever difficult. It was this very faith that gave denomination and acceptance to the Father of the Faithful: for when *Abraham* was bid to offer up that Son in whom he had receiv'd the promises that he should be the Father of many Nations, that faith by which against hope he believ'd in hope, that it would come to pass, and staggering not, consider'd neither difficulty, rather natural impossibility of what was promis'd, *id est stupidi* nor was curious to satisfy himself, or indeed examin how it should or could be, as if he would model God's performances or his own expectation by the measure of his comprehension of the means and method; but accounting *God was able*, if all other methods fail'd, *to raise him up from death*, altho he had no instance of that power, *Heb. II. 19. and being fully perswaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform, therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness, Rom. 4. 21, 22.* Now as this faith that God was able, was that faith which made *Abraham* approved; and the like faith in *Christ* we see was that which made them capable of his miraculous assistances: so (those cures and miracles being emblems, and indeed pledges of that greater cure, that far more comprehensive miracle he undertook, and came to work on mankind; the healing of their bodies not onely shadowing out the healing of their souls, but also restitution of sight to the blind, movement to the lame, and the like being partial essays of that Resurrection which he promis'd, that was to restore all those to all, at once giving life to the dead) the like assurance of his power and readines to do all this, together with a full trust in him, that whatever difficulties we encounter or imagin, yet in the performance of his promises he will never fail those who seek after, and pursue them in the ways that he hath chalk'd out to arrive at them. This faith, I say, is the first qualification that can make us capable of benefit by him: indeed as 'tis the first, so 'tis the most intimate, and onely active Principle of all Obedience, Religion, and Virtue.

For when all impressions both of God himself, of good and evil, and their after-recompence were defac'd, and tho the lineaments of these things were wrought into men in their making, and the study of Philosophy had refresh'd the dying images, yet an inundation of corruption and debauchery had overspread all, so far as that Almighty God did think it needful that his Son should be incarnated to revele again our duty and teach virtue, and to give us an example of it in his practice, even in the most severe and fatal instances, and after having suffer'd for it, and by that means ransom'd us from suffering for transgressing of our duty, then to rise again and ascend into Glory to assure the blessed recompences of Religion and Obedience, and the infinitely miserable returns of impiety and vice; if after all we either shall so far abhor the duty, as that we renounce these glorious obligations to it, turn away from the very proposal of all those advantages that are to crown it, and defy that ransom paid for them, disbelieve all, count them dreams, cheats or illusions: or however, if we cannot satisfy our selves that those rewards or punishments are possible or likely, certainly 'tis
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most impossible there can be a temptation of force to invite men to Religion or to any virtue: this method of proposal of such infinite after-recompences to our faith demonstrated by such Miracles to evince the power and their certainty, being the most vigorous struggle of Divine Compassion towards man, the utmost attempt of mercy, which alone was hopeful since all others fail'd the trial, 'twas his greatest strength apportion'd to the full-grown wickedness of the World.

At first in one thousand six hundred years from innocence the whole World was grown so bad, that God could find out but one whole family to save alive; & he destroy'd the rest for warning to all future generations: & yet in less than a quarter of that time immediately ensuing there was again onely one family, that of *Abraham*, which out of all the World he could think fit to take into his favor & his care. In whose Posterity, altho he exercis'd them with strange prodigies of sufferings and reliefs, and in the midst of Miracles renew'd his Law to them, train'd them up in that by all arts of putilliments and rewards, kept them as it were in constant discipline with present visible returns of plagues and death for every act of disobedience; so that the whole sacred History is nothing but a recurrent Tide of God's mercy, and *Israels* provocations, their sin and his punishing it. When famine, pestilence and war, all the separations which might be expected from the furnace of affliction, were utterly ineffectual, and the People were so settled on their lees, that all attempts to purify onely fretted and disturb'd, and it was necessary to rack them from those lees, and *empty them from vessel to vessel*, so that the Nation was carried captive into *Babylon*. Even this digestion of seventy years together had no more prosperous effect, than the preceeding frustrate methods; the return of the captivity brought also back the former disobedience and infidelity. And when the fulness of time was come, that the *Messiah* should appear, and restore all things, *Matt.* 17. 11. he came, as the Baptist call'd it, to a generation of vipers, *Matt.* 3. 7. When the light shone in darkness, the darkness comprehended it not. When he came unto his own, his own received him not, *John* 1. 5, 11. So that, as *S^t Luke* expresses it, When the Son of man came, he did not find faith in the earth. Where the fairest steps were made to belief, 'twas exceedingly faint and imperfect; his very disciples were of little faith, as our Savior complains *Matt.* 6. 30. -- 8. 26. -- 14. 31. -- 16. 8. Nor was this frailty superseded in the more establish'd growth of Christianity. Tho we hear in the book of *Acts* of multitudes of them that believed *c.* 4. 32. yet we hear also of some that oppos'd themselves, contradicted, and blasphemed, *c.* 13. 45. others there were who made shipwrack of the faith *1 Tim.* 1. 19. and of others that doubted, and were wavering, and weak in faith, *Rom.* 14. And so it is to this day: what *S^t Paul* said to the *Corinthians* *1 Epist.* 3. 1, 2. every Preacher of the Gospel has to say unto the greatest part of his flock, *I, Brethren, could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.* The Christian flock more partakes of the folly and weakness of sheep, than the innocence.

cence. The faces of both tend to the earth, intent on their pasture where they may range and feed with plenty and delight. In the greatest part of Professors with their faith there is mix'd unbelief, so as sometimes to preponderate, for the most part to alloy and weaken it.

And here I promise not to prosecute those grounds of unbelief so far, as to shew how they make men able to resist and conquer all Christ's methods, how they work them up into the confidence of profest infidelity and Atheism; that's not my design, but plainly and in brief to name some causes of it, not in this or the other party or perswasion, but in general, even in minds not ill dispos'd, but such as our Confessor here in the Text, who tho he do's profess he did believe, yet withal acknowledges his unbelief, *Lord help my unbelief.*

Now tho it should be granted that the motives and the means of Christian Faith are of themselves sufficient to convince the minds of men, that the Revelations of the Gospel are from God, so far as that there can remain no place for any reasonable doubt or scruple, nor by consequence plea for excusing them who give not up their faith to it; yet notwithstanding all this evidence arising from those means and motives, still many of the things to be believ'd are so inevident, for they are Mysteries, and are wrapt up in such obscurity that they astonish and affright apprehension, and while the mind is swallowed up in the abyss of such dark contemplations, whatever light strikes in from motives, yet the mind is maz'd so, that, if it assent, it cannot be without suspicion and some fear and tremulously: and difficulties often so distract the understanding, that it cannot settle, but is loose and wavering.

Now as in the contests that often happen in us betwixt the temporal interests and pleasures of this world and the eternal blessednesses of the next, in those that are sincerely satisfied of the real infinite disproportion betwixt them, yet if any present object that does flatter appetite with strong delight or other satisfaction, chance but to surprise a man so far as that his present whole attention be engag'd upon it, and it be not call'd off, nor the will apply the understanding to consider and compare the other interests, the everlasting ones, and weigh them both together, 'tis certain he will yield against his conscience to satisfy his sinful inclination; for to that his surpris'd appetite apply'd him, & that application did determine him; there being no way to resist the forcible assaults of present things that strike the mind with vigor, if the will (some way excited) do not frequently engage the understanding to contemplate on, advert to with intenseness, even with all its might those blessednesses which God's promises propose to our belief, that so the mind by reason of its constant conversation with them may not fail to call them up on all occasions, and bring them into the comparison, and vie with any present thing that do's allure, and then those will preponderate without fail. So in the other Objects of our Faith, the Mysteries, and generally in all Objects whatsoever, where the understanding do's not reach the nature, so as to discern and look into the truth of them, if there be arguments that make a fair shew and flatter
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natural reason by complying with its principles, which opposes that truth, and with their difficulties maze and appale the understanding, its assent cannot be settled firmly on the truth, unless the will cause the understanding to busy and apply it self so to the arguments and motives of its credibility, that it find a principle whereon to bottom its perswasion, such as that it can compare with, and oppose to those objections, and find reason to adhere to it against them, such as this, *God hath said it*: so that altho on one side subtle reasonings seem to commit a rape upon my understanding, and against belief almost force my assent, yet on the other side God's own authority, of which I have no cause to doubt, (if I advert sincerely to the motives of its credibility, for we suppos'd that) is of strength sufficient to secure my faith, and will never suffer it to faint at such objections, as I know arise onely from ignorance and want of principles to judg by, and from the incomprehensibility of the Object. Now if the will do constantly engage the understanding thus by frequent application to such principles, humane reason, howsoever apt to be rebellious, will be easily subdu'd and brought into captivity to the obedience of faith and our belief; will be unshaken; so that the will is justly said to have a signal interest in, and influence on our faith. To make which good I might produce Councils and schoolmen, but it shall suffice me that the Scripture says, that *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*, Rom. 10. 10. and 'tis requir'd that man *believe with all his heart*, Acts 8. 37. and it is call'd *an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God*, Heb. 3. 12. and for that reason to believe is amongst God's precepts, Faith is strictly commanded, and a great blessed reward propos'd to it, and Infidelity is threatned with eternal torments. Now commands, rewards and punishments are such things as cannot be propos'd but to the will, and are not at all made to move the understanding, which must needs assent exactly as it judges, and must judge according to appearances of objects; and you may as well desire a stone to fall up to heaven, or the Senses to perceive that which they have no sense of, as the understanding to believe against its judgment, or to judge in contradiction to what appears to it. Now this being granted, that the heart hath such a vital influence upon our Faith, and that the will contributes so much to believing, by prevailing with the understanding to contemplate on, and frequently converse with, and with great advertingency attend to those Divine and Heavenly objects and the motives to believe them: it does therefore follow

Secondly that whatsoever does engage the heart and take the will off so, as that they do not cause this application of mind, that must needs weaken and enfeeble Faith; for it withdraws that that should nourish and give vigor to it, and makes way for unbelief. Now here alas, if I should onely name the several impediments upon this account, the avocations of the heart, it would be endless. But to say nothing of particulars, whose state of life either thro the necessities of their condition or the troubles of it, or thro a disorderly uneasy temperament of body, or diseases, tho all or each of these may keep the mind almost in a perpetual disturbance, or at least

least in great inaptitude to such Spiritual application, if there be not strict watch kept to seize all lucid intervals. But to pass these, and onely touch at two Occasions in the general. And the

First is the understanding, which if it be apt to be religiously scrupulous in little things, as for the most part scruples rise about such onely, whether thro weakness of judgment, credulity, and either little probabilities that work upon that, or the arts of seducing Teachers, or else especially which is most consequent upon any close affliction, scruples rise thro applications of God's judgments or interpretation of the incomprehensible procedures of his providence, if these scruples come to work the understanding, so as that it usually entertains the will with no proposals else, which happens very frequently, and if it does thus even till the will delight it self in these its self-tormentings, and engages the whole man in a continual converse with them; so that he comes to love to aggravate his fears against himself, and wilfully retains them, and dwells on them, will not be diverted from such thoughts, which do not onely with these their invenom'd darts stab and wound the mind perpetually, and the poyson of them drinks up his spirits, but they wound his Faith. As when those scruples are in great measure and grown strong, they use to break o' it into blasphemies and desperation: so all less degrees also in their proportion raise doubts in men, not as to their own condition one but God's Attributes, and works, and dealings with mankind, which corrupt and ulcerate and poyson their belief, and it becomes languid, feeble and unsteady.

But secondly that which universally takes off the heart or will from causing this so necessary application to the objects and the motives of our Faith, is the lower appetite with its passions. For in man's life that is so perfectly dramatic, and in which the world is always shifting scenes, there happens such an infinite variety of either prosperous delightful, or cross sad accidents, which so goad and stimulate the affections, raise such ebullitions in the blood, and such impetuosity in the motions of the appetite, that the will is hurried along with them with a blind precipitation and a headlong fury; and by consequence it fares so with the faculties upon the satisfactions of those appetites. Now in this rout and confusion 'tis not possible the understanding can attend to Spiritual applications, and if this happen frequently, then thus it being frequently diverted, and its conversation with affairs of Faith much broken off, seldom reflecting on them, and so being very unaccustomed to those thoughts, all the impressions grow faint, languish and decay, the motives have no force, and consequently the belief it self is loose, and scarce hath the assurance of a thin opinion, if it were examin'd: and of all this the experience is so dreadful, that we daily see, if men go on so far as to indulge their appetites habitually, that their minds being thereby taken altogether off from the other contemplations, they come to have no love to them, no regard at all, cannot well endure to think or hear of them; and are therefore given up by God's just judgment, such as was foretold long since *2 Thess. 2. 10, 11. to strong delusions to believe a lie, even a*
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lie of that eternal dismal consequence that virtue and religion and the blessed expectation of it are mere trumpery, and renounce those truths whereby they should be saved.

But I promis'd not to prosecute this to that height; it sufficeth we having seen how the heart being by such means engag'd, and ceasing to employ the understanding upon heavenly things and on the motives to believe them, and the faith of them do's come to lose all vigor, not to be recover'd if there be not some assistance to the will, that may be able to take off that ravenous inclination which it hath to present satisfactions, and that gross torpid stupidity it labors under towards future things, and withal excite and inflame it with desires after that *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, and besides remove all those other impediments of our belief which I have mention'd. Which assistance from what hand it is to be expected, and how it effects all that, I must declare in the third place from those words, *Lord, help thou my unbelief.*

Now that the birth and growth and strength of Faith (that Faith, I say, that is effectual to salvation) is all from God, from the preventing and assisting graces of his Spirit, is a Doctrine which the Scripture is abundant in. *It is the gift of God*, St Paul saith Eph. 2. 8. and Christ says, *No man can come to me*, that is, believe in me, *except the Father which has sent me, draw him* John 6. 44. i. e. those preparations of the heart by which men are dispos'd to come at God's call and receive his Gospel, when as others whom 'tis equally propos'd to, and who alike understand it, will not come, are the effects of his good grace; and in that respect such are said to be *drawn by the Father*, and to be *taught of God*, verse 45. and v. 64. speaking to his Followers, and telling them that *there are some of you that believe not*, tho they had all the methods of conviction, having heard his preaching, seen his miracles as well as others; yet some of them notwithstanding not believing, he adds, v. 65. *therefore I said unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it be given him of my Father.* All the other means and motives, if alone, prevail not. *I have planted, Apollos watered; but 'tis God that giveth the increase*, 1 Cor. 3. 6. I need not say this is the Doctrine of the Church of England, 'tis so of the Latin and the Greek Church, and on this account of the necessity of Grace and the assistance of God's Spirit in believing, the whole Church of Christ hath universally maintain'd a war against *Pelagius* and his Followers. 'Tis more expedient to shew what he doth, and how he does proceed in doing it, how he removes those hindrances of Faith I mention'd in each faculty both of the will and understanding.

First as to the understanding, that he doth enlighten and clear it into the discerning of those Heavenly truths, appears, since *David* therefore prays, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold the wondrous things of thy Law*, Psalm 119. 18. and the like v. 27. *Make me to understand the way of thy precepts.* It should seem he apprehended wonderful miraculous dispensations in God's discoveries of himself and of his will to man, besides those of his nature, his transcendent goodness also in the pardoning our sins, in giving us such excellent Precepts, in assisting us to the performance, in accepting our im-

perfect Obedience, and in preparing everlasting blessed Glory to reward and crown it. Now that he might discern all these so sensibly as to be ravish'd and transported with them, so as that he might be wrought on to adore the blessed Donor of all these, and cling to him and them with the close and inseparable unions of Faith and love; he therefore prays that God would open his eyes, enlighten and remove all those degrees of darkness that remain'd within him, quicken and enliven all his faculties, give him a vital sense and relish of all those things, make him understand them, that believing them he might adhere to them. And since the Scripture says (I told you) that *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*, so it also therefore says that God does *give an heart to understand*, Deut. 29. 4. and *the Lord opened Lydia's heart, that she attended to the things that were spoken*, Acts 16. 14. thus preventing unbelief, which comes for want of such advertency, as I shew'd you.

And as to the Will (which hath its influence, I prov'd to you) that *God works in us to will*, is express Scripture Phil. 2. 13. And if we should but onely put the understanding in that case, wherein, as we before demonstrated, 'tis needful that the Will engage it to make applications to these Spiritual objects, when the man is not as yet byass'd or corrupted, but is onely languid and indifferent and unconcern'd, yet then there is an absolute necessity the Spirit cause it: for if the Will be it self a faculty indifferent and free, there must be some prevenient proposal, thought, or motion, that may determin or fix it; and to will what it ought, it therefore must have some good motion or proposal, such as will prevail with it. Now such proposals and motions come not from it self, the Will does not propose to it self, it cannot think or make the motion, and the Understanding, which, as the case is put, does need a resolution of the will thus to engage it, is not therefore qualified to make the motion sufficient and of force; for then it could and would apply it self without the Will's engaging of it: much less is it qualified, when the Will drawn in by the affections of the lower Appetite hath applied the Understanding, as I shew'd you, to converse with sensual objects, and by doing so 'tis altogether stein'd with their impressions and images, and hath few others to excite or entertain it self withal. In neither case, since neither Understanding nor the Will is able, there is nothing therefore but God's grace that do's it by presenting objects and occasions, and disposing circumstances so in soft and congruous seasons, as with the assistance of his overshadowing and incubating on them, may be sure to hatch some inclinations and desires that way in the Understanding and Will both. He does all by these means upon all occasions of Divine truth heard, or read, or meditated on, by his applying intimately to the mind the motives of believing, and to help the evidence by breaking in upon it with his own illuminations, which discover to the Soul the beauty of God's promises, make it see how infinitely advantageous they are to it. Thus he fills it with those beauteous images, then backs the thoughts with their allurements, so as that they love to hover and to dwell upon them; this animates them into chearful practice of all performances that tend to them: then he

he scatters as it were some gleams of future glory, shedding flashes of it in the joys of Conscience arising from the sense both of God's encouragements and assistances to duty, and of the delights resulting from the faithful, sincere practice of it: and by this joy quieting the Conscience, if it either raise fears from the apprehension of God's dealings in these outward things, or else if it be scrupulous in little things to the disturbance of his Faith, as I declar'd, convincing it that conscience is not to accuse or else excuse but by the measures of sincerity or insincerity in known real duty, not from the events or dispensations of God's providence on one side, nor on the other, in little things wherein there is no Law to guide us, and which onely prejudice or seduction can make doubtful, assuring us *the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, indifferent rites, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 14. 17. Thus, as *S^t Paul* says *Heb. 6. 4. they that have tasted of the heavenly gift, the comfort of the pardon of their sins, and consequent to that the peace of Conscience, and v. 5. tasted of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come*, have intimate experimental relish of the Gospel-promises; those powers of heaven, those omnipotent forces God hath prepar'd *to cast down every reasoning or imagination that should rise against the Christian Doctrine, and bring every thought to the obedience of it*, 2 *Cor. 10. 5*. All which are said to be effected there in them who had bin *made partakers of the Holy Ghost*.

By these means therefore he enflames the Will, sets it all on fire with ardent love to God and his rewards, and consequently to his service in all the works of Piety and Virtue, and endued with firm and settled resolutions of adhering to him in faithful constant practice of all this. And thus Christ by his Spirit, as he was the *Author*, the *Beginner of the faith*, by which he is stil'd *Heb. 12. 2.* so by the same he is the *Finisher* and the completer of it.

He was the *Author*, as that Testimony which the Spirit gave by miracles, did evince the infallible certainty and the Divinity of the doctrine to the world; for the *Spirit* is said to *bear witness* to it by those signs and wonders *Heb. 2. 3.* and those signs are called the *demonstration of the Spirit*, 1 *Cor. 2. 4.* that which did irrefragably prove and demonstrate all the Doctrine of the Gospel, and make certain Faith of it; and in this sense it is that Faith is truly said to be resolv'd into the testimony of the Spirit. So also by the same he is the *Finisher*, by the graces, the preventings and excitings, overshadowings and assistings of that Spirit working in us, as we shew'd, a firm sincere adherence to that Faith, and the obedience of it; which when it is wrought, Faith hath attain'd that height, and in that degree, that is to make us capable of those benefits which Christ hath promis'd to bestow on true believers. The last thing I was to shew, and withal whether such Believers in that true degree can say with our man here, *Lord, I believe, yet say too, help my unbelief.*

Faith, as the Son of *Syrach* does define it, is ἀρχὴ καὶ σύνθεσις τῆς πίστεως, the *principle of cleaving to God*, that which knits & joints us to him: and *S^t Paul* saith as much, when he makes the formality of an evil heart

of unbelief to consist in *departing from the living God*; and to Faith by which the just must live, opposes *drawing back*, slinking away for fear of danger or affliction, *Heb. 10. 38*. So that according as that cleaving and adherency must be firm and indissoluble, so we are to judge of Faith.

But secondly 'tis certain this adherency must be without wavering, *James 1. 6, 7*. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for let not that man (him that wavers) think that he shall receive any thing at the hands of God. A firm and infallible assurance of God's promises, a confident expectation of a grant to his petitions, tho the power of Prayer be almost omnipotent on that account, *What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them, Mark 11. 24*. yet those are not meant by Faith here; for the person that is bid not to expect a grant is here suppos'd to think and to be confident he shall receive it, but the Prayer here spoken to is for wisdom, how to behave ones self in times of chance and danger or affliction for the truth's sake, in these trials of his Faith, *v. 3*. Now that he may obtain that wisdom, he is bid to ask for it of God, but he is also bid to ask it in faith, nothing wavering, *i. e.* he must come to God for it with firm adherence to him, with dependance on him onely, and a mind resolv'd, whatever happens, to stick fast to him and his commands and methods, not to labor or accept deliverance on terms not allow'd by God and a good Conscience, must not waver betwixt duty and security, nor be double minded, so as to apply now to Christ and Religion, now to worldly carnal politics. Such double minded men that have a mind to God and their duty, but a mind also to safety, interest, or some other satisfaction, are unstable, are divided betwixt two, not knowing which to turn to, now taking one, now the other, do not stick to God, they are not faithful. It is not sound Faith, where there is not a resolv'd and settled cleaving; such false-hearted wavering ulcerates and gangrenes all.

But then thirdly, where there is that firm, sincere adherency to God and duty with such a dependance on him, there is Faith that is effectual to the ends of Faith; for this is true Faith, that works and is consummated by love, and that begets an efficacious Hope, by that hope works out the *purifying of our selves as God is pure*, and consequently does entitle us to see God, *i. e.* to the beatifick Vision.

I know there are some, who besides this certainty of adherence do require an absolute certainty of evidence, affirming there is no true Faith, but such as stands on a clear resolution into Principles more evident and certain, than those Propositions are which are made out to us by Demonstration, than any Principles of Sciences, which Principles since they are more necessary than that first one, *that which is, is*, and the contrary to them more impossible, than for the same thing that is to be and not to be at the same time while it is: by consequence they cannot but infuse greater necessity and certainty into our Faith, than there is in the knowledg of those Propositions; so that 'tis impossible for him, that is a true Believer, to say, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief*.

I shall not put it to the question, whether the Rule of Faith be
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firm and immovable, or the Principle which true Belief must be resolved into, is most infallible and necessary: for all those which resolve their Faith into God's Revelation, and that make his Word the Rule, must needs assert all that; and where it is affirm'd, that the motives laid in second Causes by God's Providence to persuade men to embrace the faith, must be such as of their own nature cannot fail to conclude points true, if they mean they cannot chuse but be sufficient to conclude that they are such as ought to be believed, that is assented to as true, I shall allow it; yea so far and in that manner as God intended that they should conclude, that is by the assistant grace and influence of his Holy Spirit, so far in that manner I will grant they could not fail to be conclusive. But that God intended they should be conclusive to us themselves with the evidence of such Metaphysical necessity, so that by consequence they cannot but infuse a greater certainty and evidence into that assent that must be given to the points of Faith, than there is in the Science of those Propositions that are first in Science; and where there is not such necessity, certainty and evidence raised by clear resolution into Principles more evident, certain and necessary than those are, there is not that Faith which is alone, is true; and consequently that all true Faith must assent with the highest evidence, necessity and certainty. This, I say, may be granted, when it shall be made appear how it is possible that God can variously deal to men the measure of Faith, if every true Believer must needs have the greatest fullest measure; or how any man that hath Faith, and by consequence is certain most infallibly, can be weak in Faith, or have his Faith increase, so as that it may grow exceedingly and wax very strong, even till it come to full assurance and plerophory: how all this, I say, is not impossible, if all true Faith have essentially this plerophory, that highest, most infallible certainty and evidence. But it is certain that God variously deales *the measure of faith*, Rom. 12. 3. that there are those who have Faith, and yet are *weak in faith*, Rom. 4. 19. -- 14. 1. that have their *faith increased*, Luke 17. 5. so as that it does *grow exceedingly*, 2 Thess. 1. 3. *wax very strong*, Rom. 4. 20. even to *a full assurance*, Heb. 10. 22. Is it not therefore certain, but that he that hath true Faith may say here with our Confessor, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief?*

Moreover if those Principles and motives blaz'd with such an evidence, so bright a lustre, of so cogent a necessity, can any man believe that God would think it needful to arm that necessity with strict precepts, fortify it with the aids of his own Holy Spirit, and eternally reward Obedience to a most invincible necessity? Dare any man imagin God could be so sportive in commanding, as on pain of everlasting torment to engage us to believe, that that which is existent is existent, or that the Sun does shine at bright noon-day, when we behold it so as that we cannot see it, ('tis our Autor's own instance?) or to assent to these must there be the graces and assistance of the Holy Ghost? or to believe the Sun shines, when it does, is that a Faith that is fit to be rewarded with eternal light and glory? In fine, since that the onely certainty of Faith which is effectual to the ends of Faith, is the certainty and

firmness of adherency to God and Christ, and to our duty, without which all other certainty, however infallible, can but help towards our condemnation; and since where the Holy Spirit and his Graces intervene not, howsoever evident men fancy that their principles and motives are, their way of resolution demonstrative, there will be no true Faith; and where he works with his Graces, tho they were not so infallible and bright, yet the adherency is firm, the Faith true and saving. Therefore there appears no evident necessity of such pompous principles and ways of resolution of our Faith. For I would onely ask, for whose sake, and on whose account it is so needful that these motives, principles and ways of resolution should be so infallibly certain, evident and necessary? Those that do embrace the Faith sincerely and are saved, or those that do not give their hearts up to it, and so perish in their unbelief? As to these, since besides all arguments internal to the doctrine, outward testimony, (the onely argument in matter of fact) and that in behalf of Christians, it is far greater and more pregnant than there is for any other fact that ever was, such as humanely speaking, is impossible not to be true; nor could there ever yet be found a rational exception or just ground of doubt against it: so that 'tis impossible but they must be convinc'd in reason, that 'tis most irrational not to assent. Those therefore that do wilfully resist their understandings and their reason, and withal God's ordinary methods of conviction, and so put a bar against his Graces and his Spirit, since much more than was enough was don for them, they are without excuse; and since they did defy what was more than sufficient in it self, and so resist God's methods also, there is no pretence or reason for more helps of evidence on their account. As for the other, those that give themselves up to the guidance of their light and reason and Almighty God's convictions, and are made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, 'tis most certain that his Holy Spirit will do all that is needful to complete their Faith, and make it certain to salvation; so that there is no need on their behalf of such self evidence of principles and motives to infuse such metaphysical certainty into their Faith. And yet this certainty of Faith not onely is the ground on which alone is built Infallibility, wherever that is to be placed, for they are not agreed about it and indeed there were no great need to assure their Faith into such certainty; but besides poor we, because we do not take upon us to assert dogmatically the necessity of such most infallible certainty, not onely are unchurch'd, but unchristen'd, concluded beyond all possibility of evasion, not to have true Faith, nor be truly Faithful. An heavy imputation: therefore I crave leave a little to consider it in one word, not desiring to reflect on others, but to justify our selves; for in truth God knows, we would as willingly go to Heaven as our Neighbors, where we know we cannot be receiv'd without true Faith.

Now tho it looks unlucky that we should be doom'd thus upon grounds, of which the Founder is himself under censure for them, and his books that laid them, damn'd even by his own Church, tho we are by vertue of their Principles condemn'd as Hereticks, be-
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cause we come not into their Church which condemns the Founder of these very Principles on their account; yet since however any thing does serve their turns, provided it condemns us, 'tis not therefore to be pass'd by. Now the ground not onely of their Faith, but this their Confidence, whereby they so exalt themselves and censure us, is the absolute certainty of the living voice and practice of that Church, which resolves her Faith by this Rule or Principle, not to believe, or teach, or practise any thing as of Faith but what they did receive from their immediate Forefathers as of Faith, and saw their practice of. For if this Principle were their Rule always, (and if it be now, it must, they say, have bin so) then the Faith of each succeeding Age must needs have bin the Faith of the preceding, and by consequence there having bin no change, the Faith of this Age must needs be the same with that of Christ and his Apostles. Now since in the resolution of our Faith we proceed not by this Rule, upon this Principle we have no Rule of faith, nor certain resolution of it, and by consequence no Faith. Now it appears at first sight fully evident that this Rule of theirs does supersede and quite evacuate those Doctrines that maintain either the sayings of the Fathers, or Decrees of Councils, or the Definitions of the Popes, or the infallible Authority of the Church, whatever that Church signify, hath any part or interest in the Rule of faith, and very justly so: for Fathers are but eminent Members of the Church, Popes can pretend to be but Heads of that Church, Councils but the Representatives, and what infallible Authority soever can be in the Church, that Church being the Congregation of the Faithful, and those onely being Faithful that hold the true Faith: therefore till it be known which is the true Faith, it cannot be known who are the true Faithful, nor by consequence which is the Church, nor therefore which is Head, Member, or Representative of it, or hath that Authority: and therefore before all, those men must have a Rule for their Faith, whereby they may try which is the true. But when we say we have God's own Revelation of his will what he would have to be believ'd, his Word, the Scriptures, they add that since we cannot know which is the Scripture but by the continued testimony of those that recommended it from the beginning, neither can that be the Rule, which needs another Rule to establish it; nor can that which is believ'd upon that other Principle of universal testimony be any part of the Rule, since what is believ'd is the Object of Faith, and so presupposes the Rule of Faith: and therefore we who make that to be the onely Rule, have no Rule, no not a part, tho the *Trent* Council do allow the Scriptures to go shares with Tradition.

'Tis easy to reply, that that which is the Object of that Faith, whereby we assent to it, as a book written by such inspir'd men, or as a true historical Narration, of which Testimony does assure us, may yet be the Rule of that Faith, whereby we assent to Doctrines as reveal'd from God, which we believe those are, that we find there recorded. And it were as easy to retort, that if this arguing were good, men could not know that the Doctrine which Christ and his Apostles orally deliver'd to them was from God, but by the testimony

testimony of the Miracles they taught; therefore neither could Christ's or the Apostles oral tradition, living voice, be a Rule of Faith to those Ages, since they were the Objects of belief, and presuppos'd those Miracles as the Rule by which men did believe what Doctrines came from God; nor can the Succession of Doctrine be the Rule, for we know not the whole Succession but by the living voice of the present Church, that does deliver Doctrine by the fore-said Rule or Principle. But not to reply to this Scholastically, but suppose for their sakes, that Scripture could be known to be the word of God no otherwise than by testimony, yet that it might be the Rule one short familiar instance shall evince irrefragably to the meanest understanding. We know the Books of Scripture are entitled Books of the Old and New Testament, both Scripture it self and Fathers giving cause for that expression. Now in making a man's testament, the Testator's last bequests, or that which he last of all wills, as to the disposal of his goods and possessions, is the primary rule, we know, by which they are to be disposed off: and when that disposition and will of his is put into writing, sign'd and seal'd, that writing, or that Instrument is secundarily the rule by which Legacies must be demanded, and upon performance of conditions the Inheritance entred upon. Now possibly they that either demand Legacies, or the Executors, yea the Heir indeed himself it may be know not either hand or seal; however that the writing was in good deed honestly subscrib'd and sealed by the deceased party, none can know, but who were present, and saw or heard him declare and publish it: and if any are concern'd to be assur'd whether it be a true will, neither forg'd nor alter'd or deprav'd, they can no otherwise be satisfied, than by their testimony. It is on that account that men give credit to that will, from thence it is of force, and afterwards continues to be so as to all ends and uses of a Will, by being witnessed and sworn to, that is, prov'd, and then enrolled and layd up in an Office for that purpose, and by that becomes a firm Record, and as such is there conserved. Now certainly no man is so far destitute of common sence to say either the Witnesses or their Testimony, or the Office that conserves the Instrument, or the Clerks and Registers or Judg of that Office is the Rule by which the man's goods must be distributed, or the Rule of those things that the Heir or the Executors must perform: for the man's last Will, I shew'd you, was the prime Rule, that Will put into writing, sign'd and seal'd, that is that Instrument the secondary Rule of all that; and the Testimony, Office, Clerks and Judg are but onely means of bringing that Will to the knowledg of all such as are concern'd, the way of assuring the truth and uncorruptness of the Instrument, and of conserving it entire for after uses.

The Application of this to Christ our Savior's Testament is easy. If by Penmen, which himself inspir'd, he caus'd his last Will in disposing the Inheritance of Heaven to be written, and what things he would have believ'd, what don, all which he seal'd with his own, God's Seal, with Miracles: and if those Penmen and the other Witnesses, before whom he declar'd and publish'd it, did attest it, and
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gave it to the Church to be conserv'd there, and her Pastors are perpetual successive Conservators of the integrity of these Records: 'tis plain our Lord's Will here is primarily the Rule of Faith and Action, and secondarily the Testament, that authentic Instrument is so; and the Testimony is no more that Rule here than in the man's Will, nor yet than the prerogative Office, nor the Pastors or the Head (if such an one there were) than the Clerks, the Judge of that Office; nor all, nor any of these are the Rule it self. The Testimony is but the means of conveying down to us the knowledge of that Testament, and of the uncorruptness of it; and as far as that Conveyance and that Testimony is assur'd and certain, so far they must grant the Faith we give, that that writing is the Rule, must be assur'd and certain. And since all the means and kinds of their Tradition make that very Testimony and Conveyance of that Book, therefore all that certainty and that infallibility their faith can have from those grounds, the same certainty and infallibility the faith we give to that Book must needs have too on their own grounds. But it hath more; for since the ground of all faith must be testimony, and by consequence none but Divine Testimony can be ground sufficient for Divine Faith, and that Testimony was, I shew'd you, Miracles, wrought by the Publisher to confirm the Doctrine, both which are in this Rule of ours. Therefore altho that universal Testimony, all their Tradition for it, which is merely humane, may be a sufficient method of conveyance to derive all notice; as the first men's eyes and ears that saw the Miracles and heard Christ, tho they be but humane senses, were sufficient to them also, they suffice not yet to a Divine Belief, they cannot ground that Faith which must be given to Divine supernatural Doctrines upon a Divine Testimony, which Tradition is not, but our Rule hath. So that the resolution of our Faith is made by a Divine Rule, such as theirs pretends not to be made by; and the mere conveyance of that Rule to us hath all that certainty and that infallibility, that they pretend their Rule it self to have, and so we may have Faith, and may be Christians. But we are never the nearer however: for if the Rule of Faith, if true, must be a means to make our assent more infallible than Science upon Demonstration, and there can be no other such Rule besides the living voice and present practice of that Church, which does, and always did resolve her Faith into it by this Principle, not to believe or teach or practise any thing as of Faith, but what they did receive from their immediate Forefathers as of Faith, and saw their practice of, which most undeniably renders their Faith impossible to be erroneous; therefore we that owne neither such a resolution, rule or principle, can neither have true rule nor Faith.

But yet how fine soever and self-evident this Principle and Resolution appear to them as speculators, if it were practically enquir'd into, it would appear the weakest of all other. For first I might evince, that ever since the first beginnings of Religion and mankind, while either they had no other rule at all but this of oral, practical tradition, as in the first times before the Law was given and Scripture wrote, their faith and practice grew all false and diabolical;

cal; or when they had another rule, so far as they made use of this rule, thereby that they did make void their own Faith and God's Laws, as the *Pharisees* among the *Jews*: or lastly, when they had not an entire rule written, as in the first Age of Christianity, while the Scriptures were not spread amongst Believers, but they had the living and inspir'd voice of the Apostles to resolve their Faith into, and by that Rule and Principle of oral practical Tradition most perfectly, yet then the most execrable Heresies that ever infested the Church, had their rise and growth.

Secondly I might demonstrate their Church did not always so resolve their Faith, and by that Principle. Look thro their Councils all from the beginning, where their Church, sometimes the whole Church met together, either to confirm the true Faith, or confound the false, and you shall find no footsteps of this oral, practical Tradition, but of doctrinal enough. The Sayings of the Fathers, and Decrees of Former Councils, and the Texts of Scripture, these they call their Demonstrations.

Thirdly where there is most need still of a certain rule and resolution, there this is unpracticable wholly; namely in all great divisions of the Church in points of Faith. To instance in the *Arrian* contentions, where the World was against *S^t Athanasius*, and *S^t Athanasius* against the World, and the Pope himself *Liberius* was then *Arrian*, who could then hear and distinguish the living voice of the Church? When the whole East was so universally and bloudily divided in the matter of Images, one *Greek* Council defining against them, and another for it; and the West as much, the *French, Italian, German* Bishops presently in a great Synod declaring against them, and the *British* Church particularly. Now I will not ask how it was possible the greater parts of the whole Church should so at once have laid aside their infallible self-evident Rule, and chanc'd together to forget it, should not once bethink themselves whether they had seen their Forefathers practise that Worship or no, and heard them teaching that they had received it too from their Forefathers: nor ask how it was possible their Enemies should not mind them of it, if it were the Churches rule, and had bin generally taught and practised, and assure them by their Principle how impossible that it should be erroneous. But there is not a word of this in the whole two *Nicene* Councils, but some Texts of Scripture and some Sayings of the Fathers, which no more evince the practice, than *Tentordin* steeple does cause *Goodwin* Sands. But I will ask, how in the noise and the confusion of both States and Churches, while wars and Anathemas thunder'd in the quarrel, how it was possible poor souls could hear and distinguish what the living voice and present practice of that Age was, which was so extremely various and contradictory? Those that were then to be instructed in the Faith, what could they hearken to? How could they guide themselves by that Rule, when as in their Doctrines they condemn'd each other, in their practice murder'd one another? And when each party pleaded that theirs was the Faith deliver'd to them, which should they believe? The major party. How should they know infallibly which was? How be assured the

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the major party is requir'd? Why truth must be on that side where the most are? What self-evident Rule had they to judge of these by? Surely none. Accordingly it was not by this Rule, but by being overpower'd they receiv'd that Faith and practice.

Fourthly that it may appear in no case useful in the calmest Sunshine of the Church, and when, if ever, they were all of one mind; namely before *Luther*, when if ever there were any Article that the *Latin Church* was possessed of an explicit belief of, it was that of Purgatory, as it is now held amongst them: there was all expresses of an oral practical Tradition for it, and if there were not, 'tis impossible to know when any Doctrine is receiv'd upon that Principle, so that the Rule is frivolous as to practice; yet, as if that Principle had ow'd the very Founder of it a great spight, he must go write a Book against that Purgatory, which stood by his own Principle, for which he is under censure by his own Church. But least this should seem onely an Argument *ad hominem*, I will urge onely one instance.

There was a time when the immaculate Conception of our Lady stood by oral practical Tradition, for in the publick Liturgies of their Church it was expressly own'd and celebrated. For in their Liturgy printed 1551. after a devout Praier to the B. Virgin there is added *Ave, Hail Mary, full of grace &c. Blessed also be Saint Anne thy Mother, out of whom thy virgin flesh came without any stain, immaculate.* And again, *Hail &c. woman, blessed be thy Mother Anne, out of whom thou didst proceed a Virgin without any stain or sin.* Once more in another Praier, *All hail thou most chaste Mother of God &c. and blessed be thy Parents Joachim and Anne, out of whom thy virgin flesh proceeded without stain, immaculate.* The same too was defin'd expressly in their Oecumenical Council at *Basil* in a session on purpose for it c. 36. after long debate decreeing that she never had Original or Actual sin, but was immaculate; and tho the Pope for other reasons, and not this definition, would not confirm this Council, yet besides that by the way of oral practical Tradition his Holiness is declar'd to have but one vote and no negative; yet if his vote signify, *Alexander VI.* a little after gave ten thousand years of pardon for all mortal sins, twenty for venial *toties quoties* to all that said devoutly in that Worship of our Lady and *S. Anne* the former Praier, *Rubr.* Now if the Church did not believe what was thus in her publick Praiers, in her definitions, which was the judgment of her Pastors, of the whole Church Representative, but if somewhat else must intervene to prove what is of Faith, the Rule is insignificant, it is impossible to know their Churches Faith at any time. But we are bound to think they would not in their Solemn Divine Worship owne what they did not believe, and they could not believe any thing by this Rule but what they did receive, and so their Faith and Practice consequent must have bin always, and must be infallible. Yet we know that was defin'd the Doctrine taken up merely to countenance the Worship that had formerly bin given to the Blessed Virgin in the celebrating her Conception. For since it always was the Churches Rule never to solemnize with a Festival but what they did account was Holy, according to that saying of

a See also in the end of the Roman Missal printed at Paris in a large 4^o. in the Praiers at the later end for the Cloisters, &c. upon the Feast of the Conception, there called Immaculate. L. Hor. Beat. 6. M. Paris 1534. p. 85.

^b Epist. 174.

^c In Breviario
Monast. Paul. V.
P. M. auctori-
tate recognito
vers. ad finem
tertiæ lectionis
in Festo Con-
ceptionis ita se ha-
bet, sentiant
omnes tuum
Juvamen qui-
cunque cele-
brant tuam
sanctam Con-
ceptionem.

^b S^t Bernard, *quo pacto festus habetur qui minime sanctus est?* And accordingly the present Church that does still celebrate it, also in her new Reformed ^c Breviaries calls it *Sanctam Conceptionem*; having therefore entertain'd the Festival, they must needs entertain the Doctrine. And the forenamed Council does expressly owne this in defining it *ut consonum cultui Ecclesiastico*, in that it was agreeable to that Worship which the Church perform'd in the celebration of it. But if you would know how the Solemnity began, you may receive it from themselves thus. A Canon of a Church in France greatly devoted to the Blessed Virgin, returning home over the large mouth of the *Seine* in a vessel alone from the other side, where he had bin committing Adultery with another man's wife, and as he sail'd singing the Hours of the Blessed Virgin, a great troop of Devils drown his vessel & himself in the deep, and his soul they drag'd away to torments. On the third day, while they were tormenting him, the Mother of our Lord came thither with a train of Angels, asking why they did unjustly so torment the soul of her servant? Whom they answer'd that they had a just right to it, for it was taken in its being about their employment: she replies, if it ought to be theirs whole service it was in, then of right it is mine, for you seiz'd it as he sung my Mattins, so that you are guilty. Upon which they fled and left it, and the Blessed Virgin brought his soul back to his body and himself alive to shore, where falling at her feet he said, *Dear Lady, what shall I render unto thee for so great benefits that thou hast don unto me?* she replies, *I desire that henceforward thou commit no more Adultery, least the later end be worse than the beginning; I desire moreover, that thou wouldest devoutly celebrate the Feast of my Conception yearly on the eighth day of December.* Good Lord! that singing Mattins to our Lady should atone for him whose Vespers had bin offer'd up to a foul shrine, to his Paramour, celebrated in the vile Embraces of his Neighbor's Wife? That the Blessed Virgin should be so concern'd for her own immaculate Conception, so indifferent, so easy, or indeed indulgent to the gross Adultery of others? However, as it well became him, he obey'd her and observ'd it: and upon two other such like visions so did several others. But the Worship by all this was onely private mens particular devotions; therefore there was one more made to *Anselme*, who immediatly began it in his Priory, and being made Archbishop afterwards of *Canterbury* made it publick, and then *Innocent* the III. did so in *France*, and so the Worship became universal in their publick Services; and to justify that Worship too, the Doctrine of immaculate Conception was receiv'd into those Services, and then defin'd in that great Council above mention'd. Had this but bin in one of the dark Ages, it had certainly prevail'd, but something checking with the doctrin of the whole world that was more awake then, the Popes afterward, altho they kept the Worship up, durst not vouch the Doctrin for a point of strict Faith, tho sought to by two solemn Embassies from two Kings of *Spain*, *Philip* III. and IV. Now truly by the equipage, pursuit and carriage of the business one would think they came to crave an Audience for some new Faith, as they were wont for any extraordinary grant or dispensation:

sation: that at *Rome* they could decree Divinity as they did Acts of the Conclave, and give out Articles as they did Cardinals Caps, and make a new Creation for belief; for sure they did not send that Embassy to enquire whether their own immediat Forefathers had so taught them, and so forwards that there had bin always a perpetual succession. But tho that would not do, 'tis evident there was a doctrinal Point defin'd by the great Representative of their whole Church, and for some Ages receiv'd with the Devotions and the Worship of their whole Church, and by consequence into their Faith; for otherwise they gave Worship upon that account which they did not believe: and it is also evident to fight, how doctrines did come in into their Faith upon all least pretence of Visions, (the known way) some that were devout men began a practice, after other some in power adopted and gave credit to it, and then gave authority; by this means the practice in a while grew universal, then became their Doctrine and their Faith.

Now I would know whether it was so, it came along to them by the way of oral practical Tradition. If it did, 'tis not a sure infallible Rule of conveying Faith; if it did not, then that Church did not still receive their Faith upon that Rule and Principle or by that method, tho that they did so is their first great Principle: and the great Master of that Scheme assur'd his Holiness it was not possible to maintain their doctrine otherwise against the subtlety of the *English* Hereticks. And truly they that make the greatest noise amongst us now, are fled to the last hold of it: but that indeed it does alone protest Infallibility whether of the Church or the Succession of their doctrine by that way of practical Tradition, and that is the infallible most necessary certainty of Faith. But I shall say no more to this than what the grand Abettor of the Principle hath said in answer to himself, objecting what was to be said to them that could not penetrate into his demonstrations, see the force and evidence of that Rule and Principle, and yet have that Faith that's necessary to Salvation, I shall give it you in his own words, as near as I can put them into *English*. He says, *there is a certainty deriv'd into the understanding of these men out of their will; for since they think themselves assur'd these truths were brought down by the Church from Christ to them, & stand convinc'd of that act, this is sufficient to cause their wills firmly to adhere to them, and by that adherence to repell all difficulties and objections to which curious wits are subjects. And whether the man see that the Authority of the Church which he follows is of more force at least to him than particular objections in those truths; or whether he thinks nothing at all of it, but rests stedfast in that assent which his very ignorance caus'd, 'tis plain he hath a certainty of will, which in its way extends it self to the Government of his whole life answerably to that his perswasion, and by consequence he hath a certainty exclusive of all doubt, and such as moves him to direct his actions all to God, that is, there is in him that Faith which worketh by love.* So he. Now hence 'tis evident by his Concessions, first that there may be a saving Faith which hath not that infallible certainty arising from the motives, Guide, or Principle, or way of Resolution. And that secondly a Certainty deriv'd into the Understanding from a Will that is

piouſly diſpos'd ſufficeth. Thirdly, that there is this certainty, where the Will firmly cleaves and adheres to God, relying on him with a vigorous hope and truſt, directing all the actions up to God and to his ſervice, and perfevering in it to the life's end. Now this is all that I am all this while contending for. It is not by ſelf-evident or demonſtrative methods, or by an infallible Guide that he provides againſt men's unbelief; but when with preparation, like our man here in the Text, in weeping earneſtly we betake our ſelves to him, crying out for help and direction, and applying our underſtanding meekly to attend his methods, he diſpoſes piously the Will to entertain the gracious bleſſed Propoſals of the Goſpel with complacency and heartineſs, and from converſing with the experience of them to prefer them before all worldly carnal things that uſed to bait our luſts, raviſh our hearts, and carry us away from God and from our duty: and it is againſt this *unbelief*, in thus *departing from the living God*, that his aſſiſtances are mainly level'd, and our Prayers chiefly are to be directed. For 'tis moſt infinite madneſs to perſwade and ſatisfy our ſelves we are of the true Church, have the onely true certain Faith, if yet our practices be ſuch as ſet us at as great a diſtance from Almighty God, as Hell is from Heaven; and while we do commit ſuch things, 'tis as impoſſible we can adhere to God, as 'tis impoſſible for Chriſt to have communion with *Belial*. It is a Contradiſtion by ungodly actions to defy God and turn our backs upon, and depart from him, yet to cling and adhere to him; 'tis, as I ſay, a Contradiſtion to believe that we have Faith, while we do not cling to, and adhere, but depart from him. *Lord, help thou* this our *unbelief*. And if his grace but once diſpoſe us to prefer the bleſſed expectations of a Chriſtian, he does eaſily prevail with us to cling to them with ſuch certain aſſurances, as will carry us thro all the ſtages of our life and duty, with all chearfulneſs and conſtancy. This is that certainty of Faith by which the Martyrs cleav'd to, and embrac'd at once the Croſs and their Religion, firm in dying as believing; and when with arts of torment they broke all their joynts and their limbs piece-meal, ſcatter'd all their parts aſunder, tore their ſouls out of their bodies, ſtill they kept their Faith whole, and their Tormentors could not tear one Article of their belief or Chriſtian practice from them: and when their Wills were once inflam'd with the deſires and expectations of God's preparations, then no other martyring flames could make them ſhrink. Thoſe ſeem'd to them but brighter Emblems of, and ſpeedier Conveyances to that Eternal Light and Glory, which their Faith had given them the evidence and the firſt viſion of: they knew by them they onely did expire into Everlaſting Life and Glory.

S E R M O N

XIV.

THE CHRISTIANS LIGHT

is to shine before men.

Matt. 5. 16.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.



THE words have two parts, a command and a reason of it: the command, *Let your light shine before men*; the reason, *That they may see your good works* &c.

The command affords to us this instruction; the life of a Christian is to be fruitful and exemplary. Both these are commanded not onely in the command it self, but proved in the reason, *That they may see your good works*: there must therefore be works, which are the fruits of virtue. Yea and fruitfulness is every where requir'd by Christ, and if we look upon the current of Scripture and our duty, we shall find that it will not serve a Christian's turn not to bring forth ill fruit, to be onely barren ground, not to have vices bud and sprout within us and grow with an increase of sin; but we must do good. In the Parable of the Sower *Matt. 13. 23. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth some an hundred fold. We are gods Husbandry, 1 Cor. 3. 9.* Now is any of you satisfied with his field, because it plows well and receives the seed most kindly, if it bring you no increase or crop, yield you no harvest? No, saith the Author to the *Hebrews c. 6. 8. such ground is nigh to cursing.* Why your works they are your crop, your harvest; and when God shall send forth his Reapers, the Angels, if they can find no returns of all God's cultivating you, but all his husbandry, his seedness, and his pains too have bin lost upon you, no increase, but onely barrenness, your end is to be burnt; or onely tares, they are to be *cast into a furnace of fire, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, Matt. 13. 42.* And in like manner by the Parable of fruit trees *John Baptist, Bring forth fruits meet for repentance; for the ax is laid to the root of the trees, therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewen down, and cast into the fire.* And David describing his blessed man *Psalms 1. does it, first by shewing he does not bring forth ill fruit.* But neither will that
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^a *Matt. 2. 8, 10.*

serve turn to hear and meditate and talk of the word of God, and not to do it. It is the very same thing as a wilderness upon the water side, a dead barren tree upon the River's bank. No his man is like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that brings forth his fruit in due season. We are God's Vineyard, *Isaiah 5.* and he tells us there, what pains he hath bestow'd upon us, *v. 2.* He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest Vines &c. *v. 4.* What could have bin don more to my Vineyard, that I have not don unto it? Now if we do not bring forth grapes, Go to, saith God *v. 5, 6.* I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard, I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will lay it wast, it shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. Yea God did not onely lay wast his Vineyard in that *Isaiah 5.* because it brought forth sower and wild fruit, but our Savior in the Gospel curst a Fig-tree, because it brought forth no fruit. And indeed that barren Fig-tree was the onely thing upon the earth that ever Christ did curse, all his Miracles were mercies, but that. An unfruitful Christian is such a thing a Savior hath no mercy for; a mere negative virtue hath so little claim to Heaven, that it cannot escape the curse of a Jesus.

And shall we apply this, first to the conviction of their opinions, who think if they lie under no gross customs, if they be not tainted with any foul commissions, they are then in a safe condition? What if they forgive no wrong, why they will do none, and so who shall lay any thing to their charge? Pardon they will not any minute offence, because they avoid the wanting it from others; and they will not hate nor malice, tho they cannot have the bowels of love, no fellowship of Christian kindness: they have no foul unclean heats, nor no devout ones; no ardenscies of lust, nor yet of zeal: so they do not blaspheme God by daily oaths, make no matter of worshipping him by daily Praiers; and if his holy name be not in their execrations, 'tis well enough tho he be not in their Petitions. No tho they go a little further, and besides their doing no gross ills have great Professions of Religion, they have all the leaves and foliage of a Christian, they make a fair shell of Piety, take abundance of pains to do all those things that are to stile them great Professors, plenty of hearing, and abundance of talking, but no doing: if you search the leaves you find no fruit, no constant tenor of good works in every kind of Christian duty; these are but too obvious stratagems of Satan and our deceitful hearts to make us satisfy our selves, either with our condition, tho our Piety look no further than to do no ill, and the positive part of Religion be altogether unregarded by us; or tho we have no more of it, but the Profession. O my Brethren, as to these last remember that the curst Fig-tree had leaves, had fair shew enough to bait our Savior's hunger, and promise him refreshment, and temt him out of the way to it: and to the other, hath God authority onely to forbid, can he command nothing from us? Are we content onely to abstain from somthing for his sake, but will not do any thing for his, nor Heaven's sake? Is not his Worship as dear to him as our lusts
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are hurtful to him, and hath he not as much reason to require that we should be devout and holy, as that we should not be profane and filthy? Can all his mercies, all his rewards neither procure nor deserve more of us, than onely not to serve the Devil? Surely, my Beloved, both these sorts of Christians shall find, that in the catalogue of sins to be accounted for, omissions shall be reckon'd, when our Savior comes to pass his sentence at the dreadful day of Judgment. See the tenor of it, ^b *Go ye cursed, for when I was hungry, ye gave me no meat.* ^b *'Tis not ye shall be damn'd because ye stript me, and because ye starved me, but because ye did not relieve me.* And 'tis so in the other, not bringing forth fruit, not doing fills up the sentence of final malediction. Matt. 25. 41, 42.

But the sadder conviction of this is for the practice of those that are nothing but commissions, whose vice is positive, men that cleanse themselves from holiness, and go on daily perfecting filthiness. If the man, *Matt. 25.* that received the one Talent, and laid it up safe in a Napkin, and did no ill with, yet because he did no good, was therefore cast into utter darkness, whither, think you, had he bin cast, if he had made that Talent the instrument of his sin, if like the Prodigal he had spent it upon harlots, or upon excesses? And whither shall they be doom'd, who do so? If it be not enough to abstain from sin, what will become of them that do little else but act it? If not to do pass sentence, how will to commit condemn? and if the half righteous shall not be saved, ^c *where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* 1 Pet. 4. 18. If the tree with leaves, that was green in foliage be curst, shall not the dry and rotten one be burnt? Alas for these men, what a long stage of duty have they to go thro (if they do intend in this life ever to be better) who have not yet set forth, have entred upon any part; who have not ^d *cast off the works of darkness,* which yet, when they have don, they d Rom. 13. 12. have but half, they must *put on the armor of light,* such too as will shine: they must be fruitful and exemplary.

And this second quality is indeed the great design of this Text, which hath more force in it than that of a single command; for the verse is a conclusion following upon the three former. He tells them that they are *Salt,* and *Sun,* and a *City,* and a *Candle,* things that are visible or else diffusive of their vertues, and then concludes *Let your light,* or rather, *So let your light,* as a candle gives light unto all that are in the house; So do ye, *Let your light shine before men.*

Light is set here for Christian Holiness and Purity, as I shall shew you; and that most fitly, because nothing so pure as Light, clear as shine and noon-day, nor nothing so diffusive, it shews it self to all: so that the thing meant by it, is an open visible Holiness of Conversation.

Or secondly more especially to represent the Purity of a Christian Life; Light is so clear, that it is set to express the very Holiness of God himself *1 John 1. 5.* *This then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you, that God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all.* And indeed Light was the very first emanation of God in the ^e *Creation,* he said first, *let there be light.* And it is e Gen. 1. 3.

the most spiritual and pure of all visible corporeal beings, its motions seem instantaneous, and by a kind of omnipresence it fills the medium, and appears entire in every part of it: yea farther, it is not liable to stain or sulliage, sun-shine is as bright upon a Cottage as a Palace, a dung-hill as a bed of Roses; you may extinguish light, but not defile it. No expression comes near the clearness of light, and this our Holiness is to strive after.

But thirdly, most of all to represent the open visibility of Christian virtue. Nothing is so easily seen as Light, for indeed nothing can be seen but by it: in a moment it will scatter it self over the whole Hemisphere; yea Heaven it self does not bound the Sun-shine, and it passes thro the Firmament. Even so diffusive should our Piety be, shining before men, and like the Sun's light too spreading into Heaven, shining before Angels, and making them rejoice. A Christian is not to suffer any man to walk in the dark either of ignorance or of sin, whom his knowledg or example may recover; he must instruct and enlighten the mind, he must reform and enlighten the will and the affections. His pious actions must be always shining in his eyes to guide and stir him up, and every one must be Christ's star to lead to him. *They that be wise, saith Daniel c. 12. 3. shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.* Yea they are to shine so as they may turn many, that shining being both their glory and their duty. And St Paul tells how they are to shine *Phil. 2. 15. Be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.* All men look upon you, and therefore you are to give them good example. They are as watch-towers upon the sea, that have lights placed in them to guide the Mariners into safe harbor, to teach them how to shun the rocks: and this they are to do both by their own practice and by reproof. *Eph. 5. 11, 13. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. But all things that are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light.* When those foul acts that are don of them in secret, are reprov'd by a man that hath this Divine Light in him, then it appears how foul and wicked they are, which the darkness of their souls would not let them see. *John 3. 20.* it is set down as the property of light to reprove evil deeds by discovering to them the ugliness of their courses, and shewing the fair example of a contrary life, to turn them from the evil of their ways. This is to let their light shine before men.

Another expression is of a Candle *v. 15.* of which the ground is the same with that of the other, the Light of the world, onely the Type sinks a little. The Light there had a larger Sphere; for the Sun gives shine to all the world, but the Candle here gives light but unto all that are in the house, as our Savior words it, or at least that are in the room. Now this Emblem was also very necessary: the greatest part of men are of a lower rank and employment than their example should have influence upon very many, or that their actions should be called Sunshine; the acts of their calling are low, and so are those of their Piety and Religion, not considerable enough

enough to be view'd or look'd upon by many others; they are not any thing notably, and how then can they be exemplary in their lives? They are too much clouded both in their fortunes and their employments and their faculties to send forth any Raies, they cannot shine. Why yet for these our Savior hath a Type here in his Sermon, as also a great part of his life was the very practice of this exemplariness in a very low and ordinary condition. From the time that he disputed with the Doctors at twelve years old, the shine and glory of which action may seem enough to have tempted one to shew forth his light in an eminent manner, to have presently undertaken employments, wherein he might have bin seen; yet till the time that he was thirty years old he retired himself, and was subject to his Parents, living with, and serving them privately at *Nazareth Luke 2. 51.* who, God knows, were of a very mean condition, and consequently so was he, working with his hands in a mean trade. Now all this while how did his *light shine before men*, when it was immur'd in a Carpenter's work-house? Why even then it did in exemplary humility, great obedience, pious carriage, and virtuous diligence, ordering his conversation in that very mean condition, so as that made him gracious in the sight of God and of men *v. 52.* So that from his behavior in that low estate men accounted him a very good person. And then, whosoever thou art, be thou never so low, Christ hath shewed thee how to *shine before men*, as he did, tho he were the Son of Righteousness. Thou canst not be too mean to be obedient, to be careful in thy service, to be harmless, never doing or speaking ill of any body: thou canst not be too low to be abased, nor consequently to have occasion to shew forth patience, meekness, and longsuffering, and gentleness, those glorious, how-ever humble, virtues. And this is truly to *make thy light shine before men*. Tho thy example be not big enough to be look'd upon by a whole Shire, nor yet a Parish, nor a Township, thou canst not be accounted the light of the world; yet be thou never so little, thou maiest shine forth as a Candle, give example to the Family in which thou art by those virtues of being harmless. If thou have not so much Piety, so much Light as will shine abroad and make a day, yet give a roomful of example, let none grope thro ignorance, or fall into sin in the house where thou dost dwell, if thy small light of knowledg can instruct, or thy good carriage and encouragements can perswade him. And this especially concerns them that are set out to be Lights to walk before them in knowledg: Husbands, Masters, Parents, or any others, whose employment is to instruct or govern, of whom whosoever he be that by any evil carriage of his own gives ill example to those he hath to deal with, if they follow it, (as 'tis not to be expected but they will) he multiplies his guilt, and derives on himself all the sins that are his imitations. The vices of all that follow him are all his retainers, his is a family of sins, and the imitations of his Children are to be imputed to him; he is Father of villany, and hath a whole off-spring of guilt too: and all the sins that are don by his example, will appear the same thing as the Devil at the day of Judgment, and claim their Father; there the brood of iniquity will come and challenge

him, and there alike curse their Parent and the Devil to whom they equally, and as accursedly relate, as those that joined to beget their vices, that have destroy'd them eternally, both Parents of their destruction. This is certain hence, for he that but puts out the Candle, is accessary to all the falls and hurts that the darkness causeth. Now thy good Example is the Candle, which if thou do not shew forth, thou leavest them in the dark. And then if not to walk holily in all thy actions be a thing of so much guilt, it would be worth the sad serious consideration of every man, whom any others do but hear or look upon, especially if those whose age makes them capable of little else but imitation, to bethink themselves that every oath or curse of theirs may teach some others, every obscene word may stir up others lust, and instruct others what to learn hereafter: every passion, every drunkenness may make the ignorant believe those sins are not so foul, which are so customary with those that know more than they do, and by often seeing them may be invited to them; and so for other sins. And if they do, how many sins shall they have to answer for, besides their own, which, God knows, are an infinity, too many? What an invitation may one take for this from that happy consideration, that an innocent carriage, an holy Example does contribute to the blessedness of all the Souls that look upon me? Let others take delight to entertain the desires of those that keep them company with the pleasures of sin or vanity, to furnish them with instruments of delightful folly; but let me be instrumental to their being happy to eternity: I had rather be a lover of their Souls, than of their mirth. Let me be useful to the glory of my God, and the Salvation of those that are about me; which certainly I am in a good measure, if I can but have a care of approving all my actions so, as may give others no occasions to sin, but may effectually attract them to my profession. Then I do cooperate with the Blood of Christ; for that was poured out to buy men from their vain conversation, from which if my Example will but help to reduce them, I shall save Souls, and in my Light they shall see a Light of everlasting Glory on themselves, and my Light also will shed Glory towards God; for so I *glorify my Father which is in heaven*, the reason of the precedent command.

And this is incumbent especially in a dark season, such as this to which we are condemned; wherein to say nothing of those mists of error in which the generality of us are lost, engaged in a confused crowd of Religions, tost up and down with a tumult of pretending opinions, and either wholly in the dark, or having onely false lights that do misguide us, so that we know not which way to get out. Omitting these, there is a grosser darkness does inhabit with us, such as that which makes Hell the Region of utter darkness. 'Tis not ignorance but wickedness that dwells there, and that is the Region not of mistakes, but of impiety, and we go on in such a constancy of works of darkness, as does require an everlasting night to cover, and go on in such a fearlessness, as if that night could hide us from that God, who clothes himself with light. And what is the duty in relation to such a season? You have it *Phil. 2. 15, 16. That ye may be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God, without*

without rebuke, unblemish'd in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom shine ye as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. A severe harsh injunction, that man must therefore have the stricter care that his life be blameless and unblemish'd, must therefore be more forward in devotions & holy performances, because most men about him are far otherwise, because he lives among loose people. The contrary indeed might prove a good encouragement to live a blameless life, because I live amongst harmless holy people; for then what provocation have I to be otherwise? Besides the shame of being otherwise among such would abundantly restrain me, when if I did commit any enormity I must be look't upon as a stain and blemish in the very beauty of Holiness, look like a Negro in the midst of glorious beauties, as a dash of Hell in the Landshape of Heaven: besides this, 'tis easier to be harmless among those that are so. If the generality of persons were truly pious, how could any one almost be otherwise among them that are so dispos'd, as neither to provoke, nor give admission to a sin, where every one is so truly meek as to bear any thing, and yet every one so virtuously just as to offer nothing unfit; such humble patience as to entertain any cross, any vexation quietly, and yet such meek true-hearted charity as not to give any? Indeed if every body that one hath occasion to converse or deal with were a full Christian, there could be no discontent at all, Heaven would be upon Earth: and then if I were in the midst of such a Nation or People, there were Argument enough to make me harmless, both because I should have no occasion to be otherwise, and because I must be so, that I might be unblemish'd. But a perverse and crooked Generation as it deserves no kind of dealing but its own, to return them the like is but just dealing one would think, and onely recompence, not injury. So not to do is almost impossible: perverseness is so great a goad, that *with the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward*, saith David to the Lord *Psalms 18. 26.* and then to tell me I must be harmless, because I live in the midst of a perverse and crooked Generation, looks like a very unreasonable reason. This is the sense of men. But truly this is to discourse against Text, and perfectly to go against that duty which the Scripture does so strictly enjoin upon those very grounds for which they refuse it. This is so far from doing without disputing, that we would reason our selves out of our obedience with those very reasons, for which God says we should obey. And truly very justly; for when is any use of light but in the dark? 'Tis then most time for us to shine, when there is nothing else but works of night about us. When thou art engag'd in the conversation of those profane people, or by any occasion cast into the company of them; when either custom, or passion, or carnal inclinations make them without regard of God and Piety transgress or break one or more Commandments, if thou be a Christian, and consequently pretend to those things here which Christ says every Christian is, if thou be a Light, then God hath cast thee where there is some business, some employment for thy light; and truly that hath several things to do in such a case. One is to *reprove* Eph. 5. 11, 13. And truly as to this duty of

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reproving,

reproving, that is if the persons offending be such, as either are my charge, or such, as preserving that respect that is due to Authority and distance, I may speak to freely, then clearly to reprehend them; or if they be otherwise, then by some humble gesture or other meek manner to give them to see that sense I have, and every Christian ought to have of their sins, and that tho' I respect their persons, yet I dislike and detest the crime, is such a piece of Piety, as if there were no other engagement to but that of Friendship, methinks it should prevail with me. For should I see my company that I pretend a kindness to, or any of them that I call friend, going to drink a cup of poison either heedlessly or in an humor, or stab himself in a frolick, when probably by speaking I might hinder it, at leastwise I may hope to do somewhat towards it, if I but beg them to be kinder to my friend, and not to stab or poison him that I have a kindness for, not to destroy my friendship; shall I think I have a friendship for him, if I would not so much as make essay to hinder it, but let him take this course of ruin? Shall I say, I have a kindness for him, when I would not so much as mind him of that precipice he stood upon the edge of, nor offer to desire him back? Or is it indeed more friendship to pledg him in the dagger or the poison, or when I see him at the brink of headlong destruction to thrust him forwards, and to throw my self down with him? This is indeed the way of the world's kindness, but God deliver me from such a friend, I can have legions of such as those in Hell: the Devil hath bin shewing me such kindness constantly ever since I did know what sin was, offering me the company and the delights of sin, urging me forwards to them. No sure I that should think that man had scarce affection for me, who would not tell me to prevent a little danger, or a mischief; or that should but see a great unhandfomness about my habit, or foul stain upon my face, which probably would make me laugh'd at by the company I was then going into, and should not care to give me warning, should much less think he lov'd me that would not tell me of a spot or deformity, which would render me hateful to God and all the holy Saints and Angels, nor come to keep me from eternal condemnation. I think he loves me most that labors heartily to do me most good, and he that endeavors to make me blessed, does that. And truly can you tell me what other very great use there is of friendship (which yet is one of the greatest desirables in this world) besides this of having one that will heartily mind the making of me better, and so helping me forwards towards that which is infinitely and everlastingly my greatest concernment? All other uses may be had without it, but a faithful Monitor, a Reprover cannot be had without it. The benefit of such reproof, where it is follow'd, is the worthy issue of such an excellent thing as holy friendship, God-like love. And indeed the kindness of reproving befits well the most bosom-friendship, that is tied by the utmost engagements of this world. This where it did speed (and they that love in earnest will desire and labor that it may) would be sure to breed a kindness as lasting as their Souls, they need feel no decay of it, while there is an Heaven to reward the good success
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of such Reproofs. And a much greater kindness too 'twould be than any little carnal endearments, and the merits of mutual delights beget common interests, and common pleasures, and common children are not like common salvation; when one of these pairs shall look upon the other as the Angel that watches over him to keep him from falling into evil, as *Lots* two Angels that took him by the hands to hurry and to force him out of *Sodom*: as one to whom he does not only owe his share of the comforts of this life, but the comforts of Religion and the Hope of Eternity. This must cement beyond all carnal Unions; and he that evermore hath a friend whom he dares trust, and hath no interest disjointed from his own, would give a commission, and desire that friend to reprehend him in whatever thing he sees amiss: however I may be passionate at the time, yet let this be your warrant; do it, I may think on it afterwards; do not let me be ruin'd, because in that hot moment I would be angry to be saved; if you love me, love my happiness, and not the satisfaction of an instantaneous passion, or the letting me enjoy that present folly. Rather than see me hot with anger, will you see me dwell with everlasting burnings? When I come to my self, the heat will change into devout, and into loving warmth; and if I do recover by it, both our Souls at last in one close Pyramid of zealous and affectionate Flame will mount to Heaven.

Now I have said all this, and do consider that by almost all the world reprehensions and kindnesses are thought two very distant things, I know not whether all this will signify much, nor may be would it more, if I should press this property of Light, this kind of shine that a Christian is bound to, reproof of whom them he sees sin from the reason of the Text, the glory that will accrew to God by it. When in a loose and vicious company a Sinner does run on in a full carrier, transgress without a rub, if there be no one there that is fit, and dares own Piety and the Lord of it, they are quite put out of countenance, and vice becomes creditable in that company; and accordingly you may see many that otherwise are not very apt to sin, yet then they will offer at little Atheistical beginnings of it: they will endeavor, because they will be in the fashion of the company. And this is one of Satans advantageous seasons, when as we see if there be but one by of a sober and discreet virtue, that dares speak meek reason, or dares when they do swell their Souls in filthy folly of one or other sort, or are loud in the rants of vice by disliking gestures, let them know that such unclean entertainments are detestable to a sober person, or withdraws abruptly, & by such a departure shews, that he scorns to stay to behold or hear such impurities; this often does not only hinder those beginners, take them off that would have bin dabbling, but does sometimes a little damp the progress of the most professed Sinner. It is a bridle to his neck, he will not march so furiously in his carrier of oaths, or of obscenity, or whatever other sin; he does not indulge himself so full a licence: and so by this means God gets some respect, and Religion a little repute, when they see it hath some followers, and God hath some that will not see him dishonored. And truly, my Brethren,

Brethren, do but consider what a storm it does use to raise in any man to hear an absent Friend or Relation abused, or evil spoken of. If we be in any degree of them the world calls Gentlemen, then nothing but the sword must make return to such a word, nothing but life and soul can answer, nothing but blood and death repair: and 'tis this resentment we, in whose company the disgrace was offer'd, think ourselves more concern'd, than that Friend that was the subject of. And then methinks you should not think it strange, if there be some that do believe they have so much relation to God, and that he hath approv'd himself to be so much their Friend, they cannot but take it unkindly, and speak, when they hear him affronted, and see him dishonor'd. And methinks too it should not be unreasonable to expect this from all of us to whom God hath bin Friend enough, that we should do this handsom, this noble glorious thing, as to right the Lord in companies where we are, and to credit our Maker; and not let vice exalt over him, where we shall chance to be. Truly, my Brethren, this is the least that God hath reason to expect from us, even the reproof of our words, that of our open holy lives, by which as the wicked say in *Wisdom 2. 12. The Righteous do reprove their thoughts, and upbraid them with their offending the Law, and object to their infamy their transgressions.* This is strictly and to an high degree required by God of every one of us, that we may have influence upon others, to be open and exemplary, to shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven, which was the reason of the command, and the end of our very being. Now to God the Father &c.

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S E R M O N

XV.

OF THE ACCEPTED TIME,

the Day of Salvation.

2 Cor. 6. 2.

Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of Salvation.

THE words foregoing, of which these I now read are the application, run thus: *for he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation I have succour'd thee*; which God saying in the 49th of *Isaiab* 8. signified as in the type, & in relation to the Church and Nation of the *Jews* he had days of Salvation, fit and proper seasons to deliver them from their afflictions and calamities, (for Salvation often signifies that) had his עת רצון, *tempus placentiæ*, time of grace, wherein he was well pleas'd to hearken to their cries and wants, and in those he heard and succour'd them: so in the Antitype, and in relation to the Christian Church and all the Members of it (for of these *S^t Paul* here useth it expressly) he hath his accepted time, days not onely for such temporal deliverance, of which some will have the Salvation meant here, but much more for Salvation Eternal. But then as Kings, when they publish acts of grace and oblivion, do not onely set & appoint, but limit out the time for Subjects to come in, submit and return to their fidelity and allegiance, which if once elapst, they are incapable of benefit by any such grant, cannot at least plead it: so it seems God does too, and it is not sure that *whosoever*, at what time soever, *calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*, *Rom. 10. 13.* but, as King *David* told him, *they shall make their praier to thee in a time of finding Psalm 32. 6. in a time when his good pleasure is*, the very word here *Psalm 69. 13.* and this time *S^t Paul* restrains here to the present *now*, meaning not onely in the general now in times while they are under grace, are in the Covenant of it, and when the day-spring from on high hath visited them, and while they had the Gospel, that word of this Salvation: for whilest men live under this gracious dispensation, they may let the opportunities of laying hold of it go by them; while the light of the Gospel shines upon them, yet the day of Salvation may be quite gon out, of which *S^t Paul* here seems

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sollicitous for his *Corinthians* who had receiv'd the Gospel, least yet they may have *receiv'd that grace in vain*, and the Salvation should escape them. To prevent which, saith he, there is no other sure way but by seizing on the present, *Behold now is the accepted time. now is the day of salvation*: so that the words afford these subjects of discourse.

1. There is a *time* wherein we may be certainly accepted if we come to God, and there is a *day of Salvation* offer'd us.

2. This time is limited, 'tis a *day of salvation*, consequently we may possibly outstand it, and may suffer it to pass irrecoverably.

3. The onely sure way to prevent that, is to lay hold on the present, to begin *now*.

1. There is a time wherein we may be certainly accepted if we come to God, and there is a *day of Salvation* offer'd us.

The Text does make sufficient proof of this, for if the *accepted time* be *now*, and if *now* be the *day of salvation*, then there is such a day and time, which our Lord commanded to be preached to every humane creature in the world. Indeed the preaching of the Gospel is nothing else but publishing this truth, the Gospel being but a tender of Salvation upon pardon of whatever we have don amiss, and the accepting us, whenever we repent and truly turn to God, believing on him, and resolving to continue faithful to him, and all this assur'd to us by Covenant, such as God himself both made and ratified in the blood of Christ; and to prevent exception, since he gave command to have this Gospel *preach'd to every creature* Mark 16. 15. and our Church does teach us in her Articles, that we must *receive Gods promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture*, there is no pretence for controversy with a Preacher of the Gospel, who shall publish there is such an offer of Salvation made us all, a time wherein we may be sure to be accepted. Yea more, not onely to ascertain but to work effectually this acceptance, howsoever wicked and rebellious we had bin, he sent his Son, the Son of God to be incarnated to treat a Reconciliation; for so chapter 5. 19. 'tis said, *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself not imputing their trespasses*. For this he made him shed his blood upon the Cross, and die and live again; for *thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, that Repentance and Remission of sins might be preached in his name to all Nations* Luke 24. 46, 47. Yea for that he gave this crucified Jesus all the Glory, Majesty and Power of Heaven; for *him hath God exalted to his right hand to be a Prince and Savior to give Repentance and Remission of sins*, Acts 5. 31. A wonderful Oeconomy if we reflect upon it, and sufficient to astonish both our faith and apprehension also, that the Great Creator and the onely Lord of all things should make God man, and then ignominiously suffer a most cruel death that he might mediate and purchase for us terms of this acceptance and salvation, and make that ignominious sufferer, that dead man God, and give him all the Power of Heaven and Earth, that he might make us fit for, and bestow it on us. This strange transaction is no argument at all most surely, that to be at peace with us can be of any consequence to him, to whom felicity is most essential. *Lord, what is man that thou*

thou art thus mindful of him, and the son of man that thou so regardest him? in whom, if we look thro him, we can find nothing in the world that's very notable, but onely that he can defy his most Almighty Maker, so as nothing but the blood of such a Mediator could be fit to satisfy for, nothing but Eternal Hell fit to revenge; and can defy his own concerns and interests so far, as to make that Eternal Hell his choice, his most deliberate option. But however the Oeconomy of this so strange a mediation, tho it cannot prove God is concern'd at all to have this Reconciliation wrought with us that we should be accepted and be sav'd; for ^a *is it any pleasure to* ^a Job 22. 3. *Almighty God that thou art just? or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect?* ^b *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him; or* ^b Job 35. 6, 7. *what receiveth he of thine hand? If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him; or if thy wickedness be multiplied, what dost thou to him?* yet of how much the less consequence we are to God, it is so much the greater demonstration of his infinite benignity and goodness, who when he had no one motive in the world but pity to our lost condition, was so bountiful, that when all the compassion of Divinity would not serve our turn for the provision of a ransom, he took in Humanity, that God might give somewhat besides himself to purchase us a time of Grace, and a day of salvation.

Yet more, if we should trace him in his several ways of mercy which he constantly pursues those wretchless creatures, miserable us, in, that all that may be effectual and succeed to our Salvation, we should find he uses all means possible to engage us to accept of it: for not content with all his Son had don, he order'd a Succession of men to sollicite the same suit to the world's end. What God was in Christ doing, that he hath committed to us the ministry of; *Now then we are Embassadors for Christ, as if God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5. 20.* a little before my Text *ἡμεῖς ὑποκατάστατος ὄντες αὐτοῦ*, saith ^c S^t Chrysostome, when he ^c Tom. 3. *that had obliged us infinitely, our Almighty Benefactor, and had bin as* ^{p. 611.} *infinitely affronted and provoked with all ingratitude imaginable and all possible defiance, gave his own Son to be reconciled, and when they murder'd that Son when he came to mediate, and were so far from kearkning to him, that they crucified him, ἄξιον αὐτὸς ἀφέναι λείπον,* *one would think twere time to leave such to themselves, and give them over as things hopeless and irreconcilable.*

No, he sends others on the Embassy and will not let it fall; with all the soft and lowly arts of invitation they must pray you, and in Christ's name beg of you, and God does beseech you by them. Now did he please but onely to expostulate it with us, why we will resolve to be at enmity with him and Salvation too, *why we will die for ever*; it would argue a concern for us, the apprehension of which ought to be very comfortable to us: but when God descends to beseech us, (the expression looks uncouth indeed, but yet it is not strange he should intreat that which he died for, beg of us what he ask'd for not with impotent weak tears, but with strong cries on the Cross, with the bloodshed of his own onely-begotten Son;) when he thus conveys his importunate entreaties to us, that we would endure his kindness and our own eternal Blessedness, would suffer our selves

to be sav'd, it is impossible there can be more assurance given he would have us be so, that 'tis offer'd us and we may be accepted. Nor did he send these his Ambassadors as bare petitioners with empty importunities and meer intreaties of this, but they strengthen these proposals with *exceeding great and precious promises*, as *S^t Peter* calls them *Epist. 2. 1. 4.* promises both of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, *S^t Paul* says *1 Tim. 4. 8.* yea and these as sure as that there is a God that made them. Neither are they wanting to inform us of the dangers we most certainly incurr if we refuse him, merely to affright us to him, to incline us to admit Salvation rather, and prefer it before everlasting misery: and all this by his express commission, they being set by God as *watch-men to give warning to the wicked from him*, as he tells *Ezekiel c. 3. 17.* And least their discourse should be too faint, and not have force to move us, God does frequently step in himself by providential acts; when un-subduable by Reason or Religion, deaf to our very interests we pursue our sinful satisfactions with ungovernable fierce carrier, he lays a Cross on us to trash us, or lets loose a fever at us so to bring us low and make us sensible; or else he suffers our own evil counsels to entangle us, we are catcht in our own machinations and designs, he lets us taste the bitter fruit of our own doings, and our sins pull down calamities or mischiefs on us so far sometimes as to scare us with the landshape of their after-expectations, having thrown us on the brink of destruction, laid us at the gates of the grave, at the very mouth of Hell, where if God had left us, we had bin sealed up, determin'd to the irreversible retributions of our iniquities; but he interpos'd to snatch us thence and set us further off, so to enlarge our time to be accepted in, and to lengthen the *day of salvation* to us. I challenge every man's experience to attest this, there is no man but his heart bears witness to it; and to this too, how when we have thrown our selves upon temptation, he is pleas'd to blunt or turn aside the edge of it: how often have we put our selves into those circumstances, wherein thousands have miscarried as to all considerations both of this world and the other? And inevitably we had don so, but that he was pleas'd to temper the malignity of the occurrences and divert the mischief, merely that he might preserve us for his opportunities. It is for this he watches over us, as he tells *Jeremy 31. 28.* when as, God knows, we are so far from importuning him to do it that we think not of him nor of our selves, do not so much as ask his cares, indeed neglect, affront them, yea deny them; yet he spares us for these blessed purposes, and is *long-suffering to us-wards, not willing that any should perish 2 Pet. 3. 9.* Spares us that if possible he may find softer seasons wherein we may be more pliant, take impression more easily; therefore also he provides oft such a state of things as may be more effectual, more prevailing with us, as if indeed he waited for the time of our good pleasure, when himself should be acceptable to us, and his motions receiv'd by us. Yea and that they may be so, with these external methods there are also inward excitations and assistances afforded us. That he may both find and make these congruous seasons, he is either trying or solliciting and importuning frequently our very hearts,

Behold,

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock, saith he *Rev. 3. 20. if any man hear and open, I will come in to him.* 'Tis he, it seems, that waits to be admitted, and waits long too, *ἔστην ἔκτος, I have stood knocking,* and am there still doing so. Your hearts however barr'd against me by your contumacy, otherwise I that have the *key of David* and that *open'd Lydia's heart*, could not be kept out; but altho it be so, yet I do not pass by or stand at them unconcern'd expecting whether you will open and admit me, but I knock importunately and unwearied, by disquieting men in their Lethargick state of inconsideration and insensibility, by exciting apprehension to reflect upon their duty and their practice that is so distant from it and the danger of that; I attempt to rouse their Conscience, if so be when that is waked and troubled and affrighted, it may possibly prevail with them to be content to let a Savior in. Nor is he satisfied with standing still so, and expecting; for God is that very Father in the Parable, who when the Prodigal had wasted among riotous men and harlots all his portion, all the obligations of his Father's kindness, but at last made sensible by the extremity of want and hunger, and not able to find any sustenance elsewhere, then resolves on returning and acknowledging his fault, *when he was yet a great way off, saw him and had compassion on him*, did not stay his coming, but ran out to meet him, and *fell on his neck to kiss him*; yea fell lower in his kindness than the Son in his humiliation and acknowledgments, accepted him to all the dearness that relation enhanc'd by the recovery of what was lost and hopeless could pretend to. He is that Shepherd who went out to seek that lost sheep that ran from him, and that thought not of returning, who sought *till he found it*; and when it was wearied so with wilful stragling that it could not come back, carried it on his shoulders *rejoicing*. And now judge, I pray, between God and the Sinner, whether he have not Salvation offer'd him, and whether there be not a time wherein he may be certainly accepted if he come to God; when (in sum of that which hath bin said) 'tis plain, to preach the Gospel to us Sinners is to proclaim this acceptable year of the Lord, it is to tender us Salvation purchased for us, and confirm'd to us by the blood of the Son of God, which Son of his, God, was incarnate, crucified, raised, and exalted to be Lord of Heaven and Earth to work it out, and to bestow it on us; and to direct us in attaining it he keeps a standing Embassy of men commissioned to advise, premonish and sollicit, to encourage to it, represent the dangers, if we follow other, our own counsels; and he suffers us to run our selves into some of them, that the tast may make us sensible: and however we pass him by scornfully, and make no applications to his Providence, but despise his cares of us, yet he delivers us to give us more time that we may not perish; yea diverts temptations when we seek them, or defeats the mischief of them when we throw our selves upon them: and himself invites, beseeches, tempts us, finds or else makes congruous seasons, and contrives such circumstances as may press; in fine, importunes, knocks and calls on us, and runs out to meet us, follows us, seeks till he finds us, carries us home to him. And what could have bin don more to the Sinner, that he hath not don? And

^d Judges 10.
16. Zech. 2. 8.
Acts 9. 4.

^e Exod. 17. 11.

what we thus have seen him doing for particular persons, that he does much more unweariedly for Nations, in whose undisturb'd tranquillity and good righteous Government the Godliness and honesty, as well as wealth and quiet of particular men, *S^t Paul* faith, is concern'd: since in careless and loose Governments, and disturb'd and broken ones men equally grow vitious, dishonest and ungodly; and in too great calms as well as tempests are apt to make shipwrack both of Faith and of good Conscience. Therefore God expresseth his concern for Nations in most passionate words, *He rejoiceth over them to do them good with his whole heart and with his whole soul* Jer. 32. 41. and when the importunity of crying National enormities, and that are so far from being punish'd, they are not discountenanc'd, enforce him that he can forbear no longer to endeavor by some chastning to reduce them, yet *in all their affliction he is afflicted.* ^d *Isaiah* 63. 9. and tho he correct them, yet he suffers, having all the bowels of a tender Parent to them, and cries out in most lamenting wishes, *O that my people would have hearkned unto me! for if Israel had walk'd in my ways, I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries,* *Psalms* 81. 13, 14. And our Savior in like manner, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings,* *Matt.* 23. 37. Altho thou wilt endure no Envoies from me, no reconciliation, but against all Laws of Nations, which men do observe to all men, murderest all those Ambassadors that come from me, thy God, to treat it with thee, yet how oft would I my self have sav'd thee at the approach of imminent dangers? God does beseech the liberty of doing it, however obstinate they are against it. *All the day long,* faith he, *I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gain-saying people,* as *S^t Paul* expresseth it *Rom.* 10. 21. and himself faith, *I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people,* *Isaiah* 65. 2. spread them out in entreaties & assistances, to give them help and to beg of them they would receive it. We know when ^e *Moses* stretched forth his hands for *Israel*, (in *Praier* faith the *Chaldee*) God still heard, and *Israel* prevail'd against their Enemies; and when his hands were heavy and he weary, yet while others held them up stretch'd forth to God, they still prevail'd, he heard still. But when God spreads out his hands to them all day long, as beseeching them that they would accept of his deliverances they gain-say it, and continue disobedient. Yea altho they make him *serve thus with their sins, and weary him with their iniquities*, as he complains by the Prophet *Isaiah* c. 43. 24. yet by the same Prophet he assures them, *therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, c.* 30. 18. and if all his waiting by their obstinate perverseness be made ineffectual, then he seems inconsolable. In *Hosea* 13. 14. he tells *Ephraim*, *I would have ransom'd thee from the power of the grave, I would have redeem'd thee from death, from those calamities and enemies that threaten ruin and extinction to the Nation, O death, I would have bin thy plague, O grave, I would have bin thy destruction, would have brought to nothing every thing that did endanger or look fatal to thee;*

thee; but now *consolatio abscondita est ab oculis meis*, comfort is hidden from mine eyes, and since there is no further application, remedy or help for thee, there is no consolation for me. As indeed comfort was hid from the eyes of Christ, and they were capable onely of tears, he could not see *Jerusalem* but he wept over it, Luke 19. 41, 42. when once *the things that did belong to the peace of that City were hid from their eyes*, their day being ended, as he there tells them; for to that it may come, since this *accepted time* and *the day of salvation* being God's own chosen time and the day of his grace, it is also limited by him, we may outstand it, may suffer this day of Salvation to pass irrecoverably, the second thing I am to speak to.

I shall not undertake to prove 'tis limited, because 'tis here expressed but by a day, a very narrow scantling; yet our Savior so bespeaks *Jerusalem*, as if it had but that its day, when he spake to them, *O that thou hadst known in this thy day*, Luke 19. 42. and St Paul bids the *Hebrews* c. 3. 13. *exhort one another while it is called to day*. Yea more, as if that day were limited to one point of it, here 'tis worded so as that *now is the time, now is the day*; as if it were onely that point of time that stabs it self, that present instant which expires the same first moment that it is: and yet our Savior when he had told *Jerusalem* of that their day, as if that their day were no longer than the Apostle's *now*, which as it now is, so now perisheth, even while it is; so did their day, for even in that their day, he tells them, *now they are hiddden from thine eyes*. But passing these, that it is so both as to Nations and particular persons, Scripture will make evident. And my first instance shall be made in all the Nations of the Earth at once: God limited the time of his forbearance to the whole world, beyond which he resolved to be so far from using his endeavors to reclaim them, as that he would suffer them no longer Gen. 6. 3. *My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years*. He was so wearied by their obstinacy, that he positively does determine that he would not still continue to be earnest with them, struggle to reduce them, since they were so stupid, wholly sensual, mere flesh. But before he would destroy them utterly he was content to try them yet so many years, and then he brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly. Again he tells ^f *Abraham*, that his Posterity, however it should be afflicted many years in a strange Land, yet *in the fourth generation they shall come hither again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full*. Four Ages therefore they had yet allow'd them to return in, and prevent their ruin; but if they neglect that and go on to add sin still to sin, by then the measure will be heapt and the iniquity will be full. Again the *Jews*, God's own peculiar People, and *Jerusalem* his holy and beloved City had yet but its term, Dan. 9. 24. *Seventy weeks are determin'd upon thy people, and upon thy holy City to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, to compleat that which shall bring full ruin on thy nation: and of those weeks it should seem as if the day on which Christ weeping over them wil'd, O that thou hadst known in this thy day, was the last of them; for he says, Now they are hiddden from thine eyes*.

Once

Once more, the City *Niniveh* was yet more straitned; *Yet forty days and Niniveh shall be destroyed*, *Jonah* 3. 4. 'Tis true this sentence was not executed, for the mere denouncing of it gave them such a true sense of their own condition, made them so consider how they had deserv'd it, that the Scripture says *they believed God*, heartily acknowledg'd it would be just dealing with them, that they could expect no other. Whereupon *they cried out mightily to God*, and put themselves into a state of such humiliation, as whether for the severity or the universality of it, 'tis possible the world hath never seen an instance like it. And if he that did command all this were King *Sardanapalus*, as most of the Learned do conclude, a man whose name alone was set to signify all sensuality beyond whatever other character, was the expression of it to a Proverb, if he became so sensible upon one Sermon to require and practise such Mortification and Repentance, it is no wonder if God would not execute his sentence upon them that so severely executed it on their sins and on themselves. And truly those few that allow it not *Sardanapalus*, and yet place the Prophet *Jonah* not long after him, must be put hard to it to find out then so great a City, as he tells you *Niniveh* then was, and so great a King of it. But he, altho (as men of his vice possibly are apt to be sometimes) a little tender hearted, easily affected on some sudden passionate occasion, yet that being, as it mostly is, a fit[sof] of penitence, returning to his old abominable practices, after a short Reign his Kingdom was quite rent in pieces, and the City utterly destroyed, himself beginning it. He had before inflam'd it with his lust, then he set fire to it, and left nothing after him besides his Epitaph, a greater and more lively character of sensuality than his whole life had bin: and so that City, tho it did lay hold upon the *time of acceptance*, seize the *day of salvation*, yet it quickly let it go again.

And as for persons I shall need to give one onely instance, since 'tis of more than six hundred thousand men, and each in their personal capacity. All whom ⁸ Males, able to go out to war God brought from *Egypt* with a mighty hand on purpose to conduct them to the Land of *Canaan*, and possess them of it; every one of whom saw more of God's immediat presence and his Glory, had more express miracle of grace and favor and forbearance also, than yet ever any People in the world had: yet these had their time of favor limited, had their day for God's performance; which time while it lasted he endur'd their provocations of the highest measure, even when they made another God to lead them. But when that day came, and they were at the point to enter, and ^b he bid them go in and possess it, and they would not make use of it, being scar'd with news of Enemies taller than they, and so distrusting God's help they repin'd they had not staid in *Egypt* rather; then *as I live*, saith God, *because all these men have seen my glory, and my miracles which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, surely they shall not come into the Land concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein; neither shall any of them that provoked me, see it* Num. 14. 22, 23, 30. And of all that number but two onely who provoked him not, *Joshua* and *Caleb*, enter'd

ter'd it. This very instance, and the Prophe *David's* application of it also *Psalms* 95. to the *Jews* of his time, that they would not be as their Forefathers, stubborn and untractable to all God's methods, standing out against them till it was too late, but that to day if they would hear his voice, they should be flexible and pliant: this, I say, *S^t Paul* in the third chapter to the *Hebrews* urges to the Christians, that they should also be so while 'tis called to day, while that their *hodie*, their day that was allow'd them lasted, lest they should outstand it, and they also be excluded from the everlasting rest in the Heavenly *Canaan*. And he presses further in the fifth, how God do's finally withdraw his grace from those who in the day of it resist it, and makes no more tender of it to them; and illustrates this in the twelfth chapter with the history of *Esau*, who to satisfy a present appetite did sell his Birth-right, and the Privileges and the Blessing that of course attended it; and altho he sought it afterwards he was rejected, and found no place of Repentance, nothing that could make his Father change his mind, altho he sought it carefully with tears: and with the Parable of ground, which if when 'tis long water'd with the dew of Heaven, and hath drank that fatness which the clouds drop down, it shall bring forth onely briars, or continue barren, 'tis no longer cultivated, but rejected, reprobated, no more fit to be water'd with the showers of Heaven, but burnt up with scorching heat. Our Savior's ⁱ Parable about the Fig-tree too hath the same Apologue, which if with three years husbandry it bear no fruit, and in the fourth too, being manur'd more expressly, it fail also, cut it down then, lest it cumber the ground.

Luke 13.
7, 8, 9.

Whether the term that limits this *accepted time* be meted out by years and months, so much time I will bear with them and expect, as the instance of the old world gives some color for; or whether it be not set to days and hours, but measured by their reckonings of iniquity, when they have made up and filled the *Epha*, their time shall be out, as the *Anorites* example and the *Israelites* in the wilderness would evince: or whether both ways, as *Jerusalems* and *Ninivehs* seem plain for, 'tis not for me to determin. Each or any of them does assure us that the time is bounded, beyond which there is no term, no day left if we do outstand that. *O that thou hadst known in this day*, saith he, but that being expir'd, then is the hour of darkness, now they are hidden from thine eyes; nor are they onely hidden from their eyes, but God also shuts their eyes, sends them the spirit of slumber on them, that they may not see, not perceive, not understand, nor be converted, lest he heal them. The Predeterminations that do limit out the Age of mens Repentance, seem much more unalterable than those are that bound the Age of Life. Good

^k *Hezekiah's* tears and prayers got him fifteen years accession to his days, time did go back for him, and he liv'd part of his Age over again. But when the life that is allotted for the possibilities of Repentance is spun out, when the day of God's expectation is once gon, we have no instance to produce that he will call back, or protract it to us: death may let go its hold, but obstinacy in sin does not; marble Monuments have heard and bin obedient, yielded up, but the stony hard heart will not. And indeed to be inflexible

2 Kings 20.
5, 6.

arises from the very nature of that course and progress in sin that does weary out God's forbearances, outstands all his offers, waists the whole *day of salvation*. For to pass by the instances of the old World and of the *Amorites*, of which we have no more account, but that these *Amorites* were given up so to unnatural sin and uncleanness, that the ¹ *Land spued them out*; in the other, that the Daughters of men had effac'd all the thoughts and knowledg of God out of the very Sons of God, that the wickedness of man was so great that ^m *every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was onely evil continually*. But in *Israel*, whom *S^t Paul* represents to us for caution, thus their state was; they had set their hearts on present satisfactions so eagerly and impotently, that whenever there was the least want of any, they repin'd that God had brought them out of *Egypt*; that their *Jehovah* should be at that distance from them as in Heaven, and their sustenance come thence too, quite discourag'd them, broke all their confidence and faith: they must have their

ⁿ *Num. 11. 4.* Provisions and their Deity too nearer, cry out for ⁿ *Flesh-pots* and the ^o *Calf of Egypt*, that their meat and God too may be present. And altho God always answer'd their complaints by satisfying of them, miracle sustain'd them constantly; yet, as *Moses* told them, *Deut. 29. 2, 3, 4.* *Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land, the great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs and those great miracles, yet ye had not an heart to understand, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day*: they had no sense of them but what brute beasts were capable of having; onely gaz'd as lookers on them; did not mind, consider, and much less discern how great he was that wrought those wonders, and how able, ready and desirous to supply whatever they could need or he had promis'd, and that whatsoever they might want 'twas sure they should not want a miracle to furnish, and by consequence had all obligation that could be imagin'd to believe in, trust upon him and his promises. But of this they were not sensible, made no such reasonings; but when ever any thing they had a mind to was not present, or when any danger look'd upon them, disbeliev'd and murmur'd still, flew in his very face, insomuch that God says *Num. 14. 11.* *How long will this people provoke me, and how long will it be ere they believe me?* Now after all those strong, most operative ways of making faith, they still persisting in their incredulity and most unreasonable and senseless doubtings, not believing him is but consequent they would not hearken to him, and be wrought on or perswaded by him; but resisted his will always, and, as it must follow, grew more and more stubborn and inflexible, that is, stiff-neck'd, as God calls them, having their hearts harden'd. For it is the nature of things harden'd to be such intractables. And being so to that degree that Miracles, God's most effectual method, could make no impression on them, that he labor'd in vain with them, he must needs abandon them, and give them over as incorrigible: and so having worn out all his methods, and by consequence all his forbearance, he swore they should not enter in *Canaan*; and however he endur'd them to live fourty years, their opportunity was dead and their day ended.

I might

I might tell you how the same ill temper of that Nation, looking after present earthly satisfactions, consequently for a temporal *Messiah*, made them disbelieve, and hardned them against Christ's miracles and teachings, but that former instance serves my turn; and when St Paul proposes this Example to the Christians as a warning that they suffer not their day to pass them, lest they be shut out of their eternal rest, their heavenly *Canaan*, he expressly cautions them against the same two things, that they fall not by the same ensample of unbelief Heb. 4. 11. and that their hearts be not hardened by the deceitfulness of sin Heb. 3. 13. Christ's Miracles, if they did not make faith of his person and commission, of the duties, promises and threats of the Gospel to the Jews, when present with them, we may fear their efficacy may be fainter in men at this distance: and if strong inclinations to the present, howsoever sinful satisfactions of their appetites, together with long practice and converse in them, have got a great love to them, 'tis most certain that this will not suffer them to receive the love of the Gospel; no not of its promises and blessednesses, all which are so averse and opposite to those satisfactions: and not loving it, it is impossible they can be willing to give credit to it. Yea those sensual affections blind the Understanding so that indeed it discerns not the truth of it, and engage the heart so that it gives no great heed to it; and then as Attention to it doth, the belief of it must decay. The man is onely such a stupid Auditor of what is recorded in Scripture, as the Jews in the wilderness were Spectators of it, without faith or reflection; he considers not himself concern'd much in whatever it proposes, whether by injunction, threat or invitation, whether it do promise blessedness or denounce judgment, and so grows insensible of his condition as to either: and then coming thus to have no sense of his condition, therefore neither hath he any fear by reason of it, i. e. so far his heart is hardned, and so going on continuing in that state, it is so perfectly. And what that is, Pharaoh can inform us. 'Tis such an heart as admits no compunction, tho' you let fly all God's arrows at it. No respect to God, what grounds soever of experienc'd goodness he have for it, softens it: if you beseech him on God's part, he is not mov'd, nor yields altho' you threaten him; if God invite him by prosperity and kindness, he is ungrateful, and he grows more dissolute; but if he scourge him, he grows either senseless or else furious and desperate, shameless here, fearless of hereafter, of all humane things regardless, of Divine contemptuous: all past things are most perfectly past to him, he remembers nothing of the good or evil, so as to consider or make use of either; and altho' he throw away the present, yet as if the future would never arrive, altho' you lay before him certain death and the ensuing two Eternities, it is not possible to move him to provide for that Futurity. And then, when neither present, past, nor future can work any thing upon him, how is it possible to change him? Now 'tis no wonder if God give him over, when his state is thus unalterable. Indeed as this condition when 'tis grown thus irreversibile, makes the state of Hell here as to sinning, so it seems to make the state of it hereafter as to suffering, adding weight and in some sort Eternity to its

(D d 2 torments:

torments; for with the other grounds that shew it just for God to plague the little transient satisfactions of our sins with an immortal worm and everlasting burnings, this also is one, that the Sinner's appetite and resolution to sin is endless, and as much as in him lies eternal, and were he not cut off from the commission, his iniquity would be immortal. And it does appear so certainly, when if God set him out a time for his Repentance and their Reconciliation, and how great soever he have made his heaps, if he do not seal up the sum with this hard-heartedness and persevering obstinacy, if while there is yet any sand to run, he will consider and take up, then God will pass by all the rest, and cancel the whole reckoning; if yet he will refuse this mercy, will go on to fill his Ephah, and commits even while the life of his Repentance is breathing out its last, while the possibilities of mercy are upon their death-bed gasping, the *accepted time* and the *day of Salvation* just ending, there is no doubt, his will, his appetite and resolutions to it are immortal, and 'tis therefore also fit his worm should be so: and there is no security against this, but by laying hold upon the present; for *behold now is the day of Salvation*, the last thing I am to speak to.

p Jer. 8. 6.

9 Psalm 55. 23.

r 2 Kings 21.

I shall not press this from the common place of the uncertainty of this life, of which whatever we have past as death possesses, to the succeeding moments Judgment may lay hold of; we are sure of nothing but the present. But if we had not onely the assurances which constancy of health and strength of constitution give but a lease of years, as *Hezekiah* had from God himself, we have no assurance of the time of acceptance. Many men, tho they live fast, furiously spend the stock of Nature, sin yet with a much fiercer carrier, *as the horse*, ^p in *Jeremies* expression, *rusheth into the battel*, and they spend the *day of Salvation* faster. Men may deceive themselves by reckoning to repent hereafter. We cannot conclude with reason we have space left for it while our life lasts, since those opportunities are not always, and perchance not frequently, commensurate with the life or being of a profligate man or Nation: and when they end together 'tis not that their whole life or being was allotted to those opportunities, but when these are forfeit or extinguish'd, God cuts off the other. Thus indeed he did destroy the old World, when the one hundred and twenty years for their repentance were expir'd; and several men are *cut down out of time*, as *Job* saith c. 22. 16. men that *shall not live out half their days*, as ⁹ *David* saith of the *deceitful and the bloody men*, that drink their own blood when they thirst for others; men whose time for their acceptance went not out while their life lasted, because when it went out God cut off their life. But 'tis not always so. Not first in Nations: four Generations filled the measure of the *Amorites* iniquity, but five were past before destruction made approaches to them. *Judah* had its sentence of excision in ^r *Manasses* reign, but its execution was suspended till the time of *Zedekiah* near a hundred years. And again the things that belonged to the peace of *Jerusalem* were taken from them when they kill'd the *Peace-maker*, their *day of Salvation* too was darkned at *Christ's* Crucifixion, but the City liv'd yet forty years. Nor secondly in persons: *Pharaohs* time was out

at

at the sixth plague, but God at once upheld and hardned him until the tenth was past. And those six hundred thousand, that were doom'd for murmuring, were afterwards near forty years in dying, liv'd so long to rebel against more miracles. Now all that time the state of all these, whether men or Nations, was irreverfible, as to the doom past upon them. Did we know indeed our measure of iniquity, how many crimes we wanted to fill up our Ephah, make an end at once of sin and the *day of Salvation* also; 'twere no wonder if we did not think it necessary *now* to seize the opportunity, having yet so many sins good. But there are commissions of great bulk, few of which will do it; the men that sin post, soon arrive at the end of the race that is set before them. There are whose life is nothing else but perpetual variety of wickedness, and they will quickly make up their account; the constancy inflames the reckoning, and the sum does advance mightily: how know they but the next of any of these greater magnitudes may fill up the score? To such *now* onely may be the *accepted time*. However

1. They that, whenever such considerations are suggested, will not at that present, even *now* resolve to attempt to *break their sins off by repentance*, it is plain they are intangled in them, love them so, that they resolve expressly not to part with them yet, tho they are made to consider by the course of all God's several workings for them and their own provokings, that they may have wasted almost all the stock both of God's methods and their own opportunities, and will venture doing it completely, rather than forego their darling customs. Now such a love to sin, as it works induration, (as I shew'd you) hardens mens hearts; so it does betray it, and evince they are in some degree so. Such a resolution is sufficient not onely to provoke God to contract the measure and cut short the account *Rom. 9. 28.* but it self bids fair to fill it up. The present therefore must be their *accepted time*; and they do all that in them is to put out the *day of Salvation*, who do thus put off from them this *Now*.

2. Of this that hath bin said, whether Almighty God be now about to make the application, either as to what concerns the Nation or particular persons, is not my part to determine or debate; *It is not for us to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.* Acts 1. 17. Many seem indeed to have uncomfortable expectations, great fears both as to the Nation; and I must say they have reason, we may justly fear those judgments which we have deserv'd most justly, and provok'd most heinously, wilfully, impudently; and great fears too as to Religion, nor without good cause, yet not because those men that earnestly desire a change talk of it as at hand with comfort. False, ungracious, treacherous Sons to their poor Mother, who do what they can to blast and weaken her, that they may have color to forsake her. But this they have talkt oft with great confidence, and he that sits in Heaven always laught their confidence to scorn, & we hope he will do so to the world's end. Sure I am there could be no fear of what they expect and wish so from comparison of the Religions; or if we would answer our Religion

by our living. But there is great cause of fear we may provoke God to desert that reformation we deform so with our manners, and put out the Worship we unhallow. And indeed a flood of Atheism and contempt of all Religion and Virtue, or the having a Religion that is next to that itself, looks like just dereliction of them, who would not let God be in their thoughts, nor Piety or Morality in their actions. Now if this be so, and by consequent these fears be reasonable & just, there can be no prevention but by closing now with the proposal of my Text by laying hold upon the present. Any least forbearance may make our state irreverfible, and does certainly provoke God towards it; whereas, if now, when God shews us the rod, we would break off our fins, reform our selves, live up to our Religion, there would be no cause to fear destruction, since God's work were don, & whatever shall happen, all would work together for the everlasting good of those that did so. This, if earnest also, must preserve Religion to us. The certain and the onely way to keep Religion is to practise it; it is impossible that they can take it from us while we live it, and without that no Religion, however current, can be useful to us. But this must secure our Faith here, and secure us of the end of our Faith, the Salvation of our Souls.

SER-

S E R M O N

XVI.

O F T H E E V I D E N C E

of Faith.

2 Tim. 1. 12.

I know whom I have believed.



THE words do need no other explication than the reading the whole verse: it runs thus, *For which cause (for the Gospel's sake) I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* Let those that suffer for ill doing be abashed and troubled at it, I am neither ashamed of the Gospel, nor the least discourag'd by my sufferings, how great and ignominious soever for its sake, and for doing my duty in relation and obedience to it; for I trust and depend on one that will secure me, and will bless and crown my labors. That he wills and intends it I am sure, for he hath promis'd, and in what he hath promis'd I know he is faithful, and he is also able above all that I can ask or think; and consequently whatever in pursuance of his promise is entrusted to him, must be safe in his hands I am sure, *for I know whom I have believed.* So that the words direct us how to quiet and secure our selves in what estate soever affairs, whether publick or our own, are; namely in a close dependance upon God: and in the handling them I have but these three things to speak to.

1. Who this *I* is, *I know*; and in what respect qualified for such secure dependance.

2. What those cases are, wherein dependance do's admit such confident assurance, as is here express'd by the word know, *I know.*

3. Who this is on whom the person that is qualified thus does so depend, and upon what account, especially in relation to him, hath the man that does depend upon him such assurance that he can profess, *I know whom I believe*: to all which I shall make plain answers, and shall onely give you God's word for them.

1. Who this *I* here is, *I know*? and in what respect, and how qualified? This *I* here is *S^t Paul*, whom I do not mean to speak of in that narrow notion as an Apostle, but as one in such circumstances as do make him fit to represent the state of any one that is qualified

qualified to commit all his concerns into God's hands with a perfect resignation and with full assurance. Now as to this, first it is certain every person is not qualified for such dependance, cannot trust on God, rely upon his promise, as not having any right that it should be fulfilled to him. No not where the promise being general, for example, made to the whole present body of a Nation, by consequence concerns most of the individual persons of that Nation, even there it may not be sure to them: and of this we have a pregnant instance Num. 14. 30. *Doubtless ye shall not come into the Land concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein, and ye shall know my breach of promise, v. 34.* And that very justly, they first having broke with him: for there being some, at least tacit, condition still implied in all such promises as well as threatnings, therefore as to one and the other God sets this down as a general rule in his proceedings, and not onely with particular persons but with Nations, Jer. 18. 7, 8, 9, 10. *as at what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, or concerning a Kingdom to pluck up, and to pull down and to destroy it, if that Nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them: so whenever I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them, that is will not do it.* And accordingly the Prophet Daniel, tho it be said c. 9. 2. *He understood by books the number of years, that God would after seventy years restore Jerusalem, yet saith Theodoret in arabis, he did not stand still and expect the fulfilling of God's promise of it, but v. 3. sets his face to the Lord God to seek by prayers and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes, as knowing ὅτι καὶ ὠμώμενος, tho he had promis'd it a thousand times, if we render our selves unworthy of it, ἐμπαύσαντες τὴν ἐλπίδα we put a bar against God's performance, do not suffer him to make it good: and in those solemn supplications and addresses to Almighty God thus he bespeaks him v. 4. O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; whereupon St Jerom saith, non ergo quod pollicetur Deus statim futurum est, sed in eos sua promissa implet, qui custodiunt mandata illius; what God does promise any, is not therefore sure to be fulfilled; those are they whom he performs with, who keep his Commandments. With the rest that do not but transgress, the Prophet Zachary in an emblem shews God's way of dealing c. 11. 10. *And I took my staff, even beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people:* and we see the real practice with that Nation for their wickednesses Neh. 9. from the 30th verse. Now this being thus in general declar'd that all men cannot trust God, we are therefore as to this particular person, this I here to find out how he was qualified for this dependance.*

It is certain first that St Paul had bin a great Sinner, a Blasphemer, Persecutor and injurious person: 'tis true he says 1 Tim. 1. 13. he was so ignorantly, out of unbelief, he knew not nor believ'd that he did ill in doing what he did; yea more, he said that he liv'd in all good Conscience before God all that time also, had don nothing which

which he was not perswaded in his conscience that he ought to do. But altho this good conscience might prepare him for a readier and more sound conversion, than profane, presumptuous, habitual Sinners are dispos'd for; (for the will of such a one is true to God and right already, and you have but to remove the ignorance of his Understanding, a little better information must reform him, and will turn his persecuting and whatever other factious or injurious heats into true zeal, holy devout warmths, as it did in him,) yet while he was mistaken, that his good but erring conscience could not possibly excuse, much less could it sanctify his actions; 'twas injury, 'twas blasphemy and persecution, tho' 'twas conscience, guilts these of a bloody and deep scarlet, and this very conscientious man found cause to call himself *the chief of Sinners v. 15.*

Howbeit secondly he tells us *v. 16. for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering for a pattern to them that should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting;* that in me the worst of men might have example and encouragement to depend upon him for eternal mercies, if they will but come in to him, he was pleas'd to shew me mercy, call me in the very flagrancy and execution of my crimes.

Whereupon, as he says thirdly, he not onely was not disobedient to the Heavenly Calling, but (as if by owning himself chief of Sinners he had set himself a standard for his service, put upon himself an obligation to be chief of all Christ's Votaries) he became more laborious in his duty than all others; and particularly so sincere, faithful, resolute and constant, as nothing could remove him, neither opposition stop him, nor temptation divert him. Now it is this faithfulness, this being honest-hearted to Almighty God; 'tis the firmness of this purpose to go thro with duty in a constant tenor of obedience in whatever circumstance we are plac'd, whatever happens not to be allur'd nor frighted, neither bias'd nor forc'd out of it, with the conscientious pursuance of this resolution that particularly qualifies for this secure dependance upon God for success, it does dispose a man for perfect resignation of himself and full assurance. It was *S^t Pauls* case here, *for this I suffer*, saith he, (and indeed he liv'd almost in constant martyrdom) yet all this does not in the least discourage me, but by God's gracious assistance I will do my duty, come what can come. Now discerning himself thus resolv'd and thus assisted, he concludes that he hath ground enough for trust, for he that is thus faithful to him may trust on him; then he says, *I know whom I have believed.*

And that we may not think this is an instance solitary, in the third of *Daniel*, when *Nebuchadnezzar* told the three Children, *If ye worship not the Image I have set up, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?* *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego* answered and said to the King, *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King: but if not, (i. e. but if he would not) be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship*

the golden image which thou hast set up. The being conscious to themselves that they were thus resolv'd in earnest not to offend against the Lord, but to obey how dear soever their obedience cost them, and so casting themselves on him to do what he would with them, gave them confidence, made them know and say he would deliver them; and so he did. It is according to the measures of discerning the integrity and faithfulness of our own hearts that *we assure our hearts before him*, as *S^t John* expresseth *1 Epist.* 3. 19. and then tells us, *if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things*, v. 20. If we find not that sincerity within, if any thing be false there, if our conscience accuse us, our own hearts condemn us, 'tis most certain God will do so too, because he knows all those things of us that we can know of our selves. But if we truly cannot charge that insincerity upon our selves, we need not fear that God will charge us with the things we are not guilty of. No surely, as he there goes on, *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God*, v. 21. *And this is the confidence that we have towards him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him*, c. 5. 14, 15. *And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him*, c. 3. 22. Thus by assuring their own hearts to God they know this, have this confidence towards him, i. e. have the trust and the dependance in the Text, which in what cases it admits this strong assurance, that is here exprest by the word *know*, is my next inquiry.

I know. Now by the last words it should seem as if in every case, in every thing that he can want or does desire, the person that is qualified so, had a ground to trust with full assurance. *We know*, saith *S^t John*, *that whatsoever we ask we receive of him*; and accordingly in all the Spiritual needs of the *Thessalonians* both in particular and as the Church, *S^t Paul*, when he had blest them and praied for them thus: *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, *1 Thess.* 5. 23. adds in the 24th verse, *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.* And here in this Epistle of himself he says, *The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his Heavenly Kingdom*, *2 Tim.* 4. 18. Nor did good men want this confidence as to the things of this life; for in times of publick consternation, in the want of all things *Habbakuk* does thus assure himself c. 3. 16, 17, 18. *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quiver'd at the voice, rottenness entered into my bones, when he cometh up unto the people he will invade them with his troops*; but in that state he adds, *Altho the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labor of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* The extasy of trust, the rapture is too elegant and gay, too high and full of transport to admit of any descant. Holy *Job* went yet a little farther, *Tho he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, c. 13. 15. In a word at once, in whatsoever God hath promis'd, there the Faithful Christian

istian hath a right to trust. I will not be so rude as to suppose my Auditors so unacquainted with the rich and precious Promises, those Christian Treasures, which God's Book is the Repository of, that I should need to mind them of them; and indeed to do it were to read a very great part of that Book. 'Tis sure in every case of every, whether publick or particular, real just concern, whether in temporal, spiritual, or eternal things, in some indeed more absolutely than in others, but in all these there are promises; and promises were made to be believ'd, and every faithful Christian that trusts to them, does *know whom he hath believ'd*.

But yet it cannot be denied, since God hath threatned *Ezek. 14. 13, 14, &c.* *When a Land sinneth against him by transgressing grievously, then he will stretch out his hand against it; and if he say, sword, go thro the Land, and pour out fury upon it in blood, and break the staff of bread thereof; he swears, tho Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they should but deliver their own souls: then if we chance to see wickedness overspread a Nation, vice and profaness grown so universal and habitual, that 'tis almost natural; when impunity hath made it safe and upon that account familiar, and then familiar practice made it necessary, yea and great examples made it honorable, and by this all virtue is made mean and contemptible, and insolently domineer'd over or derided petulantly; when a people looks so like the thing God threaten'd so: 'tis hard to apply the promises of safety to it, or with confidence rely upon God for its preservation. And yet there is the resolution of a case so like this in the Prophet Micah c. 7. as is able to revive a dying hope, and give it vigor and security: Wo is me, for I am as when they have gathered the summer-fruits, as the grape-gleanings of the Vintage, there is no cluster to eat: the good man is perished out of the Land, and there is none upright among men; they all lie in wait for blood, they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands, the Prince asketh, and the Judge asketh for a reward, and the great man uttereth his mischievous desire, so they wrap it up. The best of them is as a briar, the most upright sharper than a thorn-hedge: and then he adds, the day of visitation cometh, now shall be their perplexity; but he recollects himself and says, Therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me. Rejoice not against me, O mine Enemy, when I fall I shall arise, when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me. So that when we cannot hope well of the Commonwealth, yet we may hope in God still. And I pray you tell me whether way looks quieter and safer, hath more comfortable expectations, to confederate, make factions, lay plots, dark, sometimes illegal, and unjust contrivances, and sow the seeds of trouble and dissention, and think with these to carry all their own away, not enduring to submit to Providence, or be contented with God's dispensations, but will help him, as if he had need of such arts or instruments, and could not govern except his commands were broke: when 'tis certain such contrivances, if they do not thwart his counsels, (which if they comport not with, he laughs at and defeats,) yet they do his commands; and then he will punish them, however he may let them give a while some*

a Matt. 10. 29.

trouble. And then whether is this better, or to do our duty faithfully and trust God? when we are assur'd, if *a one sparrow, two of which are worth yet but one farthing, fall not to the ground without our Heavenly Father*, a Church and State shall not fall without him. But yet 'tis certain Governments are sometimes broken or else fall in pieces, and while the fury of the sword does ravage all, the innocent as well as guilty suffer the same miseries, and the same carnage does devour the righteous with the wicked; yea Religion hath bin swept away too by the inundation, and whole Churches have bin quite un-Christian'd; and no doubt there was all reason in the world for this. Yet tho I will not take upon me to mark out the lines by which God moves either in his ways of mercy or of judgment, nor to give the reasons of them; yet when plenty hath brought in all sorts of luxury and dissoluteness, and (as it must needs) that corrupts all, loosens all the bonds by which Societies and Government consist, the very bonds of common right and justice, those that either mens propriety or their security and lives depend on, and besots men so, as that they take no other rule or measure of their interests than as things serve the ends and satisfactions of luxurious appetites; and if Religion also, while 'tis trampled on, despised and scofft down by such sensual persons that have no Religion, and so not having countenance, being injur'd, and cut short by others, does decay; or else, if willing to comply and save it self, it grow it self debaucht in some measure, learn by formalities to serve worldly purposes; yea possibly learns to adopt principles and consecrate some practices which are enemies to the very nature of Religion, wound, destroy Christianity, and dishonor the God of it: if every thing does thus seem to provoke and call for present ruin, and God stir himself up, as he did in the *b* Prophet, *Shall I not visit for these things, shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this*; yet in such a Nation if there be enough remaining of those that can stand in the gap and maintain the breach against him, as once *Moses* alone did, he will turn away his indignation, so as not to stir up his whole wrath; and, altho he leave them not altogether unpunisht, he will not destroy them utterly. Now he knows what the numbers are of faithful Christians, such as wrestle day and night with him and do not let him rest. If the hairs of our heads be all numbred, sure the knees are, that cleave to the ground in humble adorations and petitions to him. Yea and so they are; for when *Elijah* brought his charge in against *Israel*, whose condition lookt so desperate, that he thought there was no servant of God but himself, *I, even I only am left*, *1 Kings* 19. 10. God tells him *v. 18.* he had *seven thousand knees in it that had never bowed to Baal*: and when those three *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* are not able, seven thousand men yet may prevail. Indeed if once Religion grow so low, be so defiled that 'tis not worth preserving with all those corruptions that get into it, when not onely the Professors of it are deprav'd, but its very constitution in its vitals, in the doctrines both of faith and manners vitiated; and it is hard to shew where God did ever overthrow a Church and a Religion wholly, where it was not so; and then it was not he that did destroy it, it destroy'd it self.

b Jer. 5. 9.

self. If also in a state Judgment be turned into Wormwood, and you find oppression for Justice, and for Righteousness behold a crying; in a word, if a Church and State sink by such proportions as *Sodom* and the rest of the Cities of the Plain, when in all *Pentapolis* there was not ten Righteous, for whose sake five great Cities might be spar'd: in fine, when once they have wrought out the measure of God's mercies, and their iniquity is full, it is no wonder if the measure of their Judgment be full too, and it self irreversible and utter. But yet tho in all these Judgments, whether partial or final, Innocent and Righteous persons suffer with the wicked, *All things come alike to all, there is one event to the clean and to the unclean, to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not, as is the good so is the sinner, and he that sweareth as he that feareth an oath, Ecclesiastes 9. 2.* So as that it should seem the sincere Christian can no more depend than others, or if he do his trust will fail him; yet to omit the reasons of this dispensation of God's Providenc which are many very just ones, that alone sufficeth good men in the midst of all such Judgments to depend upon, which *S^t Paul* writes on the very account of such distresses and necessities *Rom. 8. 28. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God; even those afflictions working for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory 2 Cor. 4. 17.* They are God's words, and so trusting and depending on them we *know whom we have believed*, namely God, the person, and my last part, wherein I am to enquire on what accounts especially he that does depend upon him in these cases hath assurance, such as that he can profess, *I know whom I have believed.*

Now there is scarce that Attribute in God which is not a firm ground for resignation of our selves to, and of reliance on him. But to pass all those, which are every where in God's Book to be met with, and are urg'd with all advantage, and to name two other onely. First tis certain that we may with the most comfortable hope and greatest confidence rely on him, who, when we have most need, is readiest to relieve. As we read in the Scripture of an accepted time, of the day of Salvation, to let us know that it is not to be catcht in every season, as if whensoever we shall have a mind to be delivered and ask for it, God must hearken and command deliverances; no sure there are proper set times, and we must be unwearied in waiting for it: so also ordinarily that the time of greatest need is God's opportunity, and the day of extremity the day of Salvation, is obvious. All other times he tries us and does exercise our virtues, but when we are past all other help, then he relieves us. Therefore *David* is most peremtory with the Lord on that account *Psalms 102. 13, 14. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion; for it is time that thou have mercy upon her, yea the time is come. And why? thy servants think upon her stones, and it pitieth them to see her in the dust: and Psalm 9. 9. The Lord also will be a refuge לעזרתי בצרה, in exigentibus, in difficultatibus, LXXII. in opportunitatibus, in tribulationibus, in the true opportunity, that is, when trouble comes. And we shall find a reason for this way of working in his Praier *Psalms 109. 26, 27. O save me according to thy mercy, that they may know that this is thy hand, and that thou, Lord, hast don it.* When we are in such distress*

as is past man's aid, then if deliverance come we cannot chuse but know the hand: when we are in darkness and dimness of anguish, and if we look unto the earth behold nothing but darkness as of the shadow of death, then if any light arise we know it is the day-spring from on high that visits us.

And if besides this reason and those Texts we but consult the Annals of God's actings, we shall find it always thus: and not to mention those that refer to particular persons, of which *Joseph's* single story is a manifold instance, which also gave birth to those great events which shall make up a demonstration that this is the way of God's procedure. In *Egypt* when the design was laid so, that the People of *Israel* could not have lasted longer than one Age, (for posterity was forbidden, and the Nation was to be murder'd by a prohibition of being born,) and when they could not to avoid this persecution get out thence, except the sea would at once make a passage for them, and a wall and rampart to secure that passage; and if it also should do so, it would but land them in a wilderness, and they but fled from water to perish for want of it, and escapt being drown'd to die with thirst; a place too where unless the desert can bring forth the bread of Heaven, unless Fleh and Manna can grow there where nothing grew, they have but chang'd their fate, and brought themselves into a more unavoidable and speedy ruin: when this state of exigence was come, then God comes in by weak means, a stammering tongue and little rod works all deliverance.

c Jer. 9. 1.

And again afterwards in the captivity of that Nation, a state which *Jeremy* the Prophet when he had bewail'd in sorrowful eloquence, in lamentations that live still, yet ^c wish'd *his head had bin a fountain of tears* to weep for it; when in seventy years the people was so mixt, incorporated with their Conquerors, as must needs be very hard to separate and tear them asunder; and as for their Temple it was ruin'd and despoil'd of all its holy furniture, which was not onely rob'd but defecrated and profan'd, so as not to be likely nor scarce fit to be returned, the vessels of the Sanctuary being made the utensils of their Idol-feasts and their own riots, and those holy bowls made up their drunkenness as well as sacrilege: yet when these conquering Robbers were enjoying their spoils and crimes, as if wine in those holy bowls did stupify men past all sense, they and the great *Babylon* are taken ere they knew it, and the *Jews* return strait follow'd.

d De Bello l. 6.
c. 31.

Again, when *Cestius Gallus* had sat down before *Jerusalem* at the Feast of Tabernacles, when the Nation being oblig'd by their Religion was all in that City, and the Christians of the Land were there too, after several assaults, and when he might have taken it, he on a sudden rais'd the siege ^d *ἔξαλογώτατα*, saith *Josephus*, without any reason, no body knows why, but onely as God put it in his heart to do so to give way for the Christians to obey that voice, which the same *Josephus* saith was heard in the Temple at the Feast of Pentecost, ^d *μεταβαίνοντες ἐντεύθεν*, let us go hence, and upon it all the Christians went to *Pella*, not one staid, but every one escapt that ruin which *Titus* sitting down before that City, brought upon that People, (the

(the great Enemies of his Church) to a final utter desolation.

Once more, when after the nine Persecutions, which like so many torrents of fire had swept away the Christians in flame, *Dioclesians* like a tenth wave came as if it meant to swallow not the relics onely of Christ's Church, but also all the memory of the other cruelties; when in one small Province in a month he put to death one hundred and fourty four thousand Christians; banish'd seven hundred thousand more, and proportionably so in other places thro the *Roman* world with such success, that he took confidence to write on his triumphal Arches, *Deleto nomine Christiano*, as he had blotted out the very name of Christians, then at the last gasp of his Church it pleas'd the Lord to raise up *Constantine*, and strait the whole face of the world was Christian, and *Dioclesian* himself liv'd to see it. I might have instanced in our own so fresh deliverance, but that it would not look like an incouragement, it may be, to rely and cast our selves again upon him, if so soon we call upon our selves the same needs by the same wretchless methods; and there are some, they say, that apprehend so. And God knows the ruin of the Reformation and our Church hath from its first beginning bin still working by her restless indefatigable Enemies, and hath often bin preserv'd onely on the account I am now speaking, that when things are past all humane help, then is God's set time for relief. I know the Churches Adversaries brag of multitudes, and they come up on every side close to her; yea and which is worse, we seem to labor to make God himself our Enemy, or at least provoke him to desert that Church and Reformation we pollute so, put out the Worship we unhallow and profane so by ill lives, make those that will have nothing of Religion but some forms it may be loose them too, and let them die for want of substance, and the shew go out, not leave so much as the hypocrisy of piety. Indeed a flood of Atheism and contempt of all Religion and virtue looks like a just dereliction of them who would not let God be in their thoughts, nor Religion or Morality in their actions. Nay may it not look like a kindness to remove the Gospel which proves onely the *savor of death unto death*, put out that light which men are but resolv'd to sin against? Or can there be a greater mercy than to refuse all the means of mercy to such men as onely make them work out condemnation to them? *O Lord, to us indeed belongs confusion of face*, but notwithstanding *to the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, tho we have rebelled against him*; and as he knows how to reserve the ungodly to the day of Judgment to be punish'd, he knows too how many thousand knees do bow to him in secret, reckons all those tears that are pour'd out in Religion's and the Churches cause; and how wicked soever the Professors of Religion, the Church Members may be, if the constitution of Religion and the Church themselves yet be not viciated or defective, there is hope still. And truly whereas many blame the Reformation that it did not keep more hold upon the Consciences of the Community, did not retain some power, which altho not of Divine Institution, but things warily and by degrees brought in as seeming to work towards piety, and most certainly in humane ways of judging serving to procure
more

• Dan. 9. 8, 9.

more veneration and outward security of the Church and Religion; to work out which the other consequential worldly interests we see the very scheme of some Professions, not their discipline onely but their faith too is contriv'd: I think on the other side, if our Reformation instead of doing thus, as it consulted not at first with carnal Politicks, but Christ's institutions as the Scripture and other primitive Records conveyed them, and design'd no more to themselves than those bare naked Spiritual doctrines, rights and powers which Christ gave them, left to *Cesar* whatsoever was *Cesar's*, knowing God had promis'd Kings should be their Nursing-fathers; and to be so, is part of their Office: trusting therefore God and Governments with their protection, and defence of Church and Religion. So also if thro all succeeding times, whether of flourish or depression and calamity, Religion it self, whatever its Professors are, have retain'd always the same simplicity of principles, be it self untainted, not new model'd to serve ends or interests, then whenever men shall begin to clip it, I do not say in maintenance, seizing what their Father's sacrilege had left them, but I mean because ours did not so as other Churches, grasp some usurpt power to secure their own, shall therefore cut her Spiritual powers short, so that they cannot serve the ends of piety; because they know her Children will not, cannot by their principles resist, *i. e.* if they endeavor to destroy them for this reason, that they make men the best Subjects and of the most Christian Principles; that is, persecute their Christianity it self, and martyr that; I must profess that it will look like God's set *appointed time to arise and to have mercy upon Sion*; when it is expos'd a naked Orphan, left to his protection onely, then he cannot pass it by; but when he sees it *in its blood* thus, *he will say unto it, live*: and tho he plague her wicked and ungracious Sons, and possibly take away many of the good ones from the evil to come, yet the Religion will not die. Let them believe it hopeless who desire a pretence to leave it, who do what they can to stab their Mother, and make it a reason to forsake her then, because she is so desperately wounded; and let them declare it, who design to betray men out of it. But whether is wiser to believe these, or the God from whom we have these promises, and these experiences, and the other grounds of trust? Sure we *know better whom we have believed*, especially since the very trust to him is an engagement to him not to fail us: that's my last ground.

'Tis it self a means prescrib'd us by himself, *Isaiah 50. 10. Who is he among you that feareth the Lord, that walketh in darkness & hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, & stay upon his God.* There is nothing in the world that more engages any man that is not profligately false, than trusting to him; and for God, there is no other piece of piety or virtue gives such honor to him & his Attributes, as sincere dependance on him do's. It does acknowledge his Omniscience, that he knows our needs, & be they never so perplext & intricate, knows how to help them; his Omnipresence, that he is at hand on all occasions; his Omnipotence, how he is able above all our possibility of want; his Mercy, Goodness, & Benignity, in that he condescended to be willing to relieve us; his Faithfulness, & Truth, and
Justice,

Justice, in observing his good promises and never failing them, and his Immutability in all these and his other Attributes of loving kindness. Now truly as our miseries requir'd all these, so our trust to him gives him the glory of all these; and therefore 'tis no wonder if some men made this reliance or dependance, trust or faith our whole condition of the Covenant. But tho' 'tis true the Covenant does require some disposition in us that we also may be trusted, for those that are not faithful to him, cannot have faith in him; for as he knows our needs, he knows our hearts too, and if they be false he sees it, and the trust is broken on both sides: such hearts cannot trust him, for it is impossible that one can trust upon another, if he know that other does discern that he is false to him; for he knows that he is not in condition to be dealt with by the rules of trust. Yet the sincere and honest-hearted person may cast all his care there, Faith does his work, and he *knows well whom he hath believed.*

The sum is this, however grievous Sinner one hath bin, if he return, and with intire submission to God's will become faithful to him; and assure his own heart towards him, he may commit himself and all his Spiritual and Eternal interests with all assurance absolutely into his hands, and his temporal so far as they shall be successful in all cases, except those wherein God sees it necessary for his more advantage to determin otherwise. All his concerns too for Religion he may put into the same safe hands with all assurance; for God will never destroy his own Religion, if it do not change first, vitiate and put out it self. And in whatever Judgments God at any time shall bring upon the publick, he may perfectly assure himself, that whatsoever happens, shall be for good to him; for how sad soever the necessity be, he knows both it and how to remedy it, and is able and hath said he will, he is true and just and faithful in his promises, it is his very Nature that he cannot change or fail him; and how desperate soever his condition seem here, that state is God's opportunity, and that time his set time, and depending on him is yet a further engagement to him.

Yet in all this I have said very little, all these grounds for trust & reliance the old Covenant afforded. Thus far the Jew *knew whom he had believ'd*; but sure the Christian knows more comfortably, hath more cause to trust on God as on the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And certainly we may rely upon that Father, that he will deny us nothing, who denied us not his Son. 'Tis *S^t Pauls* argument *Rom. 8. 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.* We may resign our selves into his hands that lov'd us at these rates, and cannot but be confident as the Apostle was *v. 38, 39. that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which he hath to us in and thro Christ our Lord and Savior, or shall hinder him from preserving and delivering us in and from the hopes and fears, the terrors and allurements of them all, the temptations that either fear of death or hope of life, or malice of the Devil and his Angels, or of Principa-*

lities or powers, whether earthly Potentates or infernal, or distresses present or to come, or heights of honor or depths of disgrace may assault us with. How can these hinder, when sin could not hinder? Or what possibly can separate, when God chose to be divided as it were from his own Son, rather than any thing should separate him from the love of man? And then what may we not expect from this, the Eternal Son of God, who became one of us, that so he himself *suffering by being tempted might be able to succour them that are tempted?* Heb. 2. 18. *Able to succour?* Sure he could have done it ere he took upon him weak flesh, being God Almighty; he was not less able, when he was Omnipotent: yet being, when he was made man himself, afflicted, having the experience of our infirmities, in all points tempted like as we are, he is enabled to be much more sensibly compassionate and toucht with the feeling of our weak condition, which himself felt: so the ability which he hath gain'd, is the Omnipotency of kindness. One would have thought indeed it had bin large enough before, when to shew mercy to us seem'd more dear to him and more considerable than to enjoy Divinity, when he emptied himself of this, that he might be qualified for the other. How infinitely willing then was he to be compassionate to us, when he takes flesh to learn to be compassionate? How desirous was he to succour us, who lays down Heaven and glory above, and life here below, that he might be able to succour us? To whom can we betake our selves for mercy with such confidence, as him who made himself like one of us, that he might be a merciful High-Priest to expiate and make reconciliation? We that are the sheep of his pasture, what hands can we possibly resign our Souls into with such assurance, as to those of this Bishop and Shepherd of our Souls, this good Shepherd who not onely seeks the lost sheep that is run away, but who also *lays down his life for his sheep?* 10. 15. And what may not his poor Church depend upon him for, who *purchased to himself his Church with his own blood?* What design can he have to fail us possibly, who would be crucified for us? In a word, if one that for us men and for our Salvation would come down from Heaven, be incarnate and made man, a man of sorrows and afflictions, and would suffer want shame and reproches, agonies, a Cross, a bitter passion and a cruel death for us; and who is sat down on the right hand of Majesty and Power, hath all power in Heaven and Earth, the keys of Death and Hell; in whom all the promises of God are *yea* and *Amen*, faithful and true, faithful to immutability, Jesus Christ yesterday, to day, and the same for ever: if, I say, he that is all this, can be trusted, *we know whom we have believed.*

And now I have no more to do but onely ask, whether we are asur'd of any other whom on more or safer grounds we have or may believe? I will upbraid none with that Irony which *Eliphas* insults on *Job* with c. 5. 1. *Call now, see if there be any that will answer thee, and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn thee?* There are that do with all the evidence imaginable of a strong confidence and chearful hopes to speed in doing so, pour out their needs, their whole Souls to a fancied, or it may be true Saint, whom they have adopted as the object of their invocation, which it seems they cannot do so feelingly,

feelingly, with such a close and intimate dependance, with such comfortable expectations upon Christ himself. Now I would only put the question of ' *S^t Paul* to such a one, was that *Saint crucified for thee*, that he should be more concerned for, and more sensible of thy condition, and that thou shouldest have a greater confidence of his good will, than of his that did and suffer'd all that for thee, that he might be merciful and faithful, toucht with thy necessities, that I mention not the rest of those qualifications that do make one fit to be relied upon? 'Tis to be fear'd such persons do not know well *whom they have believ'd*. But I pass them. There are that trust their being here to Policy and Prudence, to their own contrivances, that is, trust to themselves, and give credit onely to what interest or their ambition suggests, and accordingly design ends, and devise means, weave plots, spread their nets abroad with cords, and lay snares, and do all this with that confidence of success, as if they did believe they were fulfilling Prophecies, and mov'd by the directions of Heaven; for many times they seem to do this in the fear of God, and in subserviency to Religion: but whatever fair pretences some of them may have to wash or color their intentions, God, you may be sure, hath no hand there in those designs, where his Commandments are broken. Where you discern either as to particulars, treachery, or fraud, or falseness, undermining and supplanting to serve interests, or pride; or malice, or revenge; or as to publick, interverting justice and the due course of Laws, or mutiny, sedition, raising discontents, and making breaches, 'tis not he on whom they have believ'd. And did they but consider what they see perpetually, how false interests are, and how unstable high place; how this tumbles men down headlong, those change daily; and altho men thrive so that they wash their steps with butter, they are only so much more in slippery places, where God also leaves them, sometimes overturns them suddenly. Or did they consider who the great Patrons of interest and ambition are, *Mammon* the fomentor and encourager of almost all the mischiefs upon Earth, and *Lucifer* that was discontent in Heaven, had ambition to be greater there too, mutinied and stirred sedition up against God, and got by it to be chief of Devils onely, Prince of Hell. Did these designers but reflect on these things, they would know then *whom they have believ'd*, a deceitful world, a false glittering light that mocks them, and a treacherous malicious Devil that hath bin a Liar and a Murderer from the beginning.

I might ask the sensual person, whether he that hearkens to the cravings of the one or other of his inclinations, and is so perswaded, overcome by their insinuations, that whenever any of his appetites is high, he thinks there is no joy that is like the satisfaction of that appetite, and is mad till he have it; yet hath found himself betray'd, fool'd, cheated every time he serv'd it, but still courts and embraces the false treacherous mischief, and will not be disenchant'd, whether he considers *whom he hath believ'd*, whether he knows that he lets his horse ride him, and is guided, animated by, and believes the beast.

Once more, whether he knows *whom he hath believ'd*, that ownes
(F f 2 being

f Mark 16.
15, 16.

g Phil. 2. 13.

being an Infidel, any one of those that with great seeming gravity, or wit and railery declares dissatisfaction at the proof of those things, which the world for many hundred years continued so convinc'd of, that they chose to die rather than say that they did not believe them: when as for them, good Souls, they think they can believe nothing but upon demonstration; yet if a man consider but the men themselves, the method and the means of their conviction into that their unbelief, he would find that themselves are always vicious, and that they examin little but converse much, and keep company with them that in the heat and confidence of drink and vice swear 'tis impossible those things can be, and rally them that give heed to or profess them; and then themselves give easy credit to this and their own inclinations, that would have them all impossible; for 'tis their concern, they are eternally unhappy if they be not: so that we know whom they have believ'd, their debaucht company and their evil inclinations; and these stupid Infidels are the most credulous, we see, on the least grounds of any in the world. It is not my employment at this time to make comparison betwixt the one and others grounds, the several motives of belief and infidelity; 'tis plain, Christ Judg'd the arguments and grounds of faith were so sufficient, that he positively gives his charge thus, *'Go and preach the Gospel to the whole world, he that believeth is sav'd, and he that believeth not is damn'd.* And if his threats are as inviolable as his promises, 'twill be but ill knowing him, whom we would not believe; the conviction will be very fatal, when their unbelief will become vision. And this gives me yet occasion to ask, what temptation Sinners can have not to believe, to be willing to come in to Christ and be sav'd? They cannot chuse but see all others whom they have believ'd, betray'd them and will fail them: all their satisfactions must go out, their expectations die and perish, and why will ye not take up here then, why will ye die for ever? Is your case, think you, desperate, and have you gon too far to be receiv'd if you should turn? Why our Saint here, the person of the Text declares, he was the *chief of Sinners* that obtain'd mercy for encouragement to all that would believe and turn: and if you did but know whom he believ'd, you must know one that went to meet the Prodigal in his return, when he was yet far off; that sought the lost sheep while he strayed and ran away still, till he found him, and when he was gon so far that he could not return, he carried him. And will you neither be invited into life, nor carried into it? Why will ye die? Can ye not help it? Have your inclinations and customs, think you, so prevail'd upon you, that to leave them looks impossible? Then 'tis plain you *know not whom you have believ'd.* Is any thing impossible for him, that is Almighty, whose grace is sufficient? Or can he command too hard things, who enables to perform what he commands, who, as *S^t Paul* saith, *worketh in us both to will and to do,* if we will suffer him? He never praised and tried in earnest, watched, endeavor'd, and comported with God's workings, that complains thus. You cannot but believe indeed they are too hard while you hearken to the cravings of your lusts, your customs and your inclinations; but why will you believe

lieve them still? Why will you die? Is it not in fine worth while to strive against it, but e'en go on with the stream, abandon all consideration of concern for that life? Indeed if that which God thought worth the concern of all his Attributes, the contrivance of his Wisdom, the assistances of his Almightyness, the invitations of his Promises, the engagement of his Justice, Truth and Faithfulness; worth all the issues of his Goodness Mercy and Benignity, worth the Incarnation, Death and Passion of his Son, worth Christ's Blood to purchase, worth the giving him all Power in Heaven and Earth, exalting him to his own right hand a Prince and Savior to give us repentance and remission, that we might be capable of that life, and then to bestow it on us: if this be not worth the while to strive for, not in opposition to Hell eternal, then indeed we know not whom we have believ'd. Consider how it is this issue that such put it to, a most fatal issue, but the sure one of all those that will give credit to the suggestions of their flesh and this world; Lord Christ, *we believe thee, help our unbelief.*

SER-

S E R M O N

XVII.

THE CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD

are wiser than the Children of Light.

Luke 16. 8.

The Children of this world are in their Generation wiser than the Children of Light.

Y the *Children of this World* are meant those that look after and take care for onely the advantages and satisfactions of this World, have no thought of, or at most design for any other: by the *Children of Light* all those that see farther, into one to come, and who look after that; accordingly all Christians are called so, ¹ *Theff. 5. 5.* of whom howsoever some are more and some less Christian, all yet are suppos'd to have bin *visited by that day-spring from on high*, enlightned in some measure by the Gospel, which *brought Life and Immortality to light*.

2. Those former are said here, *in their generation*, in their own affairs of this World, (which alone they busy and concern themselves in,) or in their contrivance for their Age or time in this life, to be *wiser* than those others. Now Wisdom, tho it import many offices and of highest concernment, which have place in every serious action of our lives, it weighs interests and obligations, and considers circumstances, which do sometimes make necessities, and sometimes void them, and which cannot all fall under Rules and Precepts, and are therefore left to the decisions of Prudence which does judge of them, and then accordingly direct and steer the actions; yet these offices of Wisdom do not come directly into this comparison of our Savior. Its main office in the general is ^a *καλῶς βουλευόμενος*, *to consult and counsel well and rightly*, which acts, since they cannot be employ'd but about things that must be don in order to an end; therefore

^a *Arist. Eth. 1. 6. c. 5.*

1. The Wise man always looks at, and intends some end; and
2. He pitches on such means as seem most useful, and directly tending to that end: yea

^b *Ibid.*

3. Since this Wisdom is not speculative, but ^b *μετὰ λόγου πρακτικὴ*, is *Ratio agibilium*, deals in things that must be don; it therefore sets the man upon the use of those means in pursuit of that end, it applies

plies him to it and guides him in the execution, and does all by Rules proper to each one of these Offices.

Now as to these three Offices of Wisdom, we will try to find out how far, and in what respect *the Children of this World are wiser than the Children of Light*, the Worldling than the Christian, than the most of them, yea than the best, and how this comes to pass; that so if men will not be wrought upon by any Rules, not by God's Precepts, nor by mens examples, yet comparing themselves with themselves how much they fail of the observance of the Rules of Prudence that concern the next World in comparison of their observance of those very same Rules as to this World, they may shame themselves into discretion, and may learn to be a Rule and an Example to themselves, which I must first enforce by that property of Wisdom, which I mention'd in the first place, that the wise man always looks at, and intends some end.

I suppose this, and I may well do so; for the World allows the action that hath no end, to be to no purpose, vain and foolish. Now the worldly man, as such, proposes, as I told you, to himself the satisfactions of this world, either more particularly of some one kind, or else all in general; and the Child of Light, so far as he is so, designs especially the happiness of the world to come. But then if in relation to their aims, those men be wisest that propose the best end to themselves, the Child of Light is as much wiser than the worldling, as eternal Blessedness above is better than the little broken dying starts of satisfaction here below. And truly 'tis not in relation to their several ends in general that our Savior here compares them, but the one, saith he, *are wiser in their generation*, in their own concerns; and that first in relation to their ends.

For the worldly man is intent upon his end, his will is fixt to it, and his affections all concenter in it. We are most assur'd of this by the pains he takes to compass it, all which are carried on and sweetened and made easy merely by his aims and expectation, which his heart is therefore passionately set on; for mens actions will be chearful, vigorous, and lively onely by those measures that the Soul breaths spirit into them. If the will and outward faculties lookt several ways, all his external motions would be force and violence, not nature; but since his pursuits are eager, his affections are in them. I should enter into an Abyss of matter and should find no end of the discourse, should I attempt to shew this in the several states of men of this World in relation to their several inclinations to this World's advantages. Some pour out and sell the blood and souls both of their own and other Nations, but to purchase some accession to their Territories, to enlarge their bounds and glory. And it is matter of astonishment how 'tis possible that humane nature should attain to such a monstrous excess of barbarous & bloody villany to acquire their ends, as *Sylla* and *Marius* practis'd. Yet neither should men wonder, and complain of these so much; for every little great man, that hath power, would be enterprizing upon others, outing and supplanting, catching at more power, cutting short, diminishing the rights of others to extend their own: and altho these Aggressors be not bloody as the former, (which 'tis possible

possible they would be, if they durst,) yet they are as unjust and false; and they that are not able to do so much, are not in a state to put a force on others, force themselves, break their own natures into soft compliances and servile attendances to reach their ends. 'Tis thus in all conditions, the Soldier charges and storms fire, and the Merchant storms the raging Sea and Tempests; and if the man's heart be once bent on getting wealth, he sells his : eals, his sleeps, his sweat, the whole employment of his life, and his anxieties for that which onely brings him more care and more parsimony, and by consequence more want.

Now is there any thing that is like this in those others who pretend to aim at Heaven and the Blessedness that God is happy in? Nay do they mind it cordially, when they stand before him in his house in order to it? Or is their heart upon it there, while they are praying for it? Whenever we discern religious performances are uneasy or unpleasing to us, we may then assure our selves the mind is not intent upon the end of them. For 'tis impossible he should not busy, concern himself extremely in the things that his affections are engag'd in, which possess him mainly, and which are his treasure. But 'tis as when God askt the question by the Prophet *Jeremy c. 2. 32. Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me days without number.* He asks a gentler question by the Prophet *Isaiab c. 49. 15. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not remember the fruit of her womb?* There is some object for an heart, that it should mind and pour out it self in tenderness to that dear part of its own breast and bowels; it is no wonder, if it be not with so sensible affection set on any of those remoter objects, such as God and Salvation in Heaven: but that they should be less considerable than attire, the Robe of Immortality not so much minded as a dress, that to be gay should challenge morning hours and cares, but to be blessed scarce engage a praier, wish, or thought, is sad. The truth is, such is man's corruption, that there is scarce any inclination left in nature that desires, or is indeed content to be upon the way to Life Eternal. Before any thing can be don for man, he must be made willing not to destroy himself; for 'S^t Paul tells us 'tis God that by his power *worketh in us both to will and to do.* We must not onely be oblig'd by duty not to neglect and forsake our own mercies, but we must be wrought and made contented to receive them; all God's arts and methods us'd, the terrors of the Lord, and the promises of Heaven, and the strivings of the Holy Spirit, and the power of Grace employed to work in us to will, for it is God that *worketh in us to will.*

e Phil. 2. 13.

In this the men of this World have especial advantages over the generality of Christians, that they mind and are intent upon their aim. For the mere being so engages them to the observance of that Rule of Prudence, which above all others is to regulate the counsels and the actions of all men in order to their several ends, if they mean to act wisely in relation to them, which is this, namely to be true to their own ends, still observing their main point. I say not they should never look off from it, mind no other; secondarily

condarily they must do that. For as in the wise Government of Nations Princes must take care, not onely that their Subjects live in *Godliness and honesty* and keep all the Laws, but that they *may live*, as ^d *S^t Paul* says, *peaceable and quiet lives*, secure as far as may be ^d 1 Tim. 2. 2. from the danger of their Enemies abroad or at home, in all tranquillity and plenty; and the like in Oeconomical and Military Wisdom: So in Christian Prudence we are so to look at everlasting life hereafter, as not to neglect this here, but may contrive for the conveniences of this life, to avoid what may be dangerous or incommode us, provided we do nothing that's against the other. So ^e *S^t Paul* was wise, when both the *Sadduces* and *Pharisees* conspir'd ^e Ads 23., 67. against his life, to break that their confederacy by throwing in the question of the Resurrection of the dead, which was certain to divide them, since the thing he said was true, and consequently since the means he us'd did not at all clash with his higher purposes: the Rule thus signifying, that wise men in order to whatever end their wisdom lies, must still be true to their own end, be careful to do nothing that may take them off from, or oppose their main aim, (for that were to destroy their own design) and must be certain never to avoid whatever tends most to attain their purposes.

Accordingly the Children of this World are us'd to stick at nothing that is likely to advance their ends. This was the case expressly of the Text, and thereupon our Savior pronounces they *are wiser*. The unjust Stewards aim was to provide what should maintain him and his ease and reputation the remainder of his life, a comfortable plentiful subsistence, when his office should be taken from him; and discerning no way to this, but to cheat his Master, and engage his Master's debtors in the wrong too, making them as false and wicked as himself, regards not the injustice, but pursues his mark. And so the Child of Light, so far as he is wise, in order to his aim, *the price of his high calling*; looks directly forward to it. If he cannot at once do his duty in relation to his great end, life eternal, and take care of the conveniences of this life, he will not for these let go the other, never will look after these, but when, and so far as they will consist; does not turn aside to any other ends that thwart that, is neither byas'd from his mark by any flattering considerations of whatever this World tempts with, nor is forc'd from it by terrors or whatever sufferings. We have great instances of this in the second book of *Maccabees* the seventh chapter, the Mother and her seven Sons, who looking to obtain a blessed resurrection, as *S^t Paul* saith *Heb.* 11. 35. did in order to it resolve to die under God's Covenant of everlasting Life, would not therefore accept life here, and deliverance from most cruel torments on condition to transgress the Laws. Thus the three wise men in *Dan.* 3. 17, 18. told *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand. But if not, be it known unto thee, that we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.* Thus *Eleazar* 2 *Macc.* 6. from v. 19. chose to die gloriously rather than to live stain'd with an abomination, as it behov'd them that are resolute, to stand out against such things as are not lawful to be tasted; tho

the penalty propos'd were loss of life, and tho the Officers that were his friends besought him to bring flesh of his own provision, such as was lawful for him to use, and make as if he did eat of the flesh taken from the Sacrifice, he began to consider discreetly and as became his age and his most honest Education from a child, or rather the holy Law made and given by God. Therefore he willed them straitways to send him to the grave, v. 24, 25. For it becometh not our age in any wise to dissemble, whereby many young persons might think that Eleazar were now gon to a strange Religion; and so they thro my hypocrisy and desire to live a little time should be deceived by me.

Wendelin.
Mor. Phil. p.
255.

Aul. Gell.
Noct. Att. l. 1.
c. 3.

'Tis said the Prince of Conde gave this answer to King Charles the IX. of France, who told him he must make his option either of going to Mass, or death, or to perpetual prison: for the first by God's help he would never chuse it, in the other he submitted to his pleasure, but that God would certainly dispose of them as it seem'd good to him. On the other side we have an instance, & Chilon, one of the wise men of Greece; who, whatsoever his last aim was, here his end was to live justly and according to right reason, who upon his death-bed told his friends, it was not then a time for him to flatter & deceive himself, his thoughts did not suggest unto him any thing he had don in his whole life that troubled him but one, that when he with two others was to sit in judgement on a man that was his great friend, who had broke the Law so heinously that it was necessary to condemn him, looking out for some means that might save his virtue and his friend too, he resolv'd on this, that since the suffrages were given so that none could know what sentence any one Judg in particular pronounc'd, he perswaded his Companions to absolve him and himself condemn'd him, thinking thus he salv'd his duty both as Judg and Friend: but when he came to die, he thought 'twas wicked and perfidious to draw others in to do that, which he held not just for him to do, he was not true to his own end, but was diverted by the calls of friendship to serve other, and in that he found his Wisdom fail'd him, and his Conscience condemn'd him. So that we have seen the Rule exemplified in all kinds.

Now by this Rule we may make experiment both of the truth of what our Savior here pronounces, and mens wisdom also of what kind it is, what the aim is, whether of this World or of the other, and which of the pursuers are the truer to their end, and so wiser.

There is scarce any one profession, dignity, or place of power, nor indeed condition or state of life, but is adapted so that it may serve ends, either of the *Child of this World* or the *Child of Light*, and contribute either to the advantages of this life or of that which is to come. To take a view of one or two of them: the man that gets into authority and place, may have for his end to serve God and his Country, if he intend it for an opportunity truly and indifferently to administer justice to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of God's true Religion and virtue; by such *Sons of restraint*, as the Scripture calls them, vice may be discountenanc'd, goodness cherish'd, till judgement run down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream, and the Nation be taught to live in peace and honesty; or he may intend to serve himself,

Amos 5. 24.

himself, to gratify his pride or his ambition by getting into place and power, that so he may be over others, and his person more regarded, and his will observ'd, and himself be more uncontrollable in his words and actions, may be vices; or to gratify his covetous desires, if in the perquisites of his place he find an opportunity for bribes, a power to sell justice, or what's worse, impunity of wickedness, an office where men may buy off their duties, yea their crimes and punishments, at least a place of doing something like this as they find occasion. Now whereas Authority finds good men often modest in the use of it as to its true ends of Religion and Justice, power will scarce give them countenance and courage for its executions, 'tis uneasy, or they are solicited or aw'd, and they look off, at least they seldom put themselves upon it as upon the prosecution of a thing they mainly aim at, or they seldom persevere so: on the other side in order to the other ends men struggle for them, buy the opportunities of selling, give bribes that they may have power to receive them, use all arts to compass offices to serve their worldly end with. This is more notorious if the Office be Ecclesiastical, the true end of whose Ministry is to gather Christ's Sheep that yet go astray, to carry on the Salvation of those Souls which God hath purchas'd with his own blood, to preserve his Children from Eternal Hell, to be applying to the wounds and the distempers of the body of Christ, to prepare his Spouse for the marriage of the Lamb, to be Dispensers and Stewards of his means of Grace and Glory; in fine, Fellow-workers with him to the Everlasting blessedness of those that are committed to their charge, and who is sufficient for, and does not tremble at these things? to all which yet they do solemnly in express words dedicate themselves and their faithful endeavors, and are consecrated to it by the Holy Spirit. Or the end of this Ministry may be to advance themselves, to reap the profits, to receive the fleece, enjoy the honors, no great care appearing of those other dreadful obligations, or concern that looks proportionable to them; and if men will purchase this charge too, as some say, we may be sure they do not buy the duty or those fearful obligations, and much less the Holy Spirit or his graces; but 'tis somewhat else they bargain for, which they break thro oaths to come at, some other end they aim at.

2. As for states of life I must be endless should I enter into them, to name but that which God himself did institute and first before all others, which he made to be the complement of the felicities of Paradise, to be mutual support in every state of life, give all the comforts of society with innocence, to preserve from vice in the most dangerous and fatal instances, and so assist in the recovery of lost Paradise; to fill earth, so as by their good education it might people Heaven, and repair its loss of fallen Angels. But some also may intend no more by it than dowry, or to serve the needs or interests of families, and to raise them; for as for other satisfactions, they intend to make them to themselves much otherwise, and design not this at all a bar to any, do not look upon it as God meant it for a remedy, because they would not be preserv'd from the transgression, onely they purpose to have such posterity, it may be, as

the Law will suffer to inherit what their vices leave, and their arts can secure from Creditors. Yet truly, since men learnt to disbelieve or not regard their own immortality, and then learn not to care for living after they are gone hence in a good name; it is not strange if they esteem not living in posterity, and however brutish they are, mind not yet that immortality which beasts endeavor towards, to live in successive Offspring: yea where such men have it, they so little mind the giving them good education, that their vices onely seem to live in their descendants. Thus men convey ruin into all the future Ages of their own families, and all this the most certain consequent of depraving this Divine primary Institution which was of such absolute necessity and benefit to mankind as he judg'd, and of slighting his ends in it, drawing it aside, and so making it of no reputation to others.

By these few instances we may discern, that there is no profession place or state of life, but may be taught to serve ends either of the *Child of this World* or the *Child of Light*. It is not my part to affirm that most men make them minister to worldly purposes, that is not necessary to make good my Thesis, which says onely that the *Children of this World* are truer to their own ends, more careful to do nothing that may call them off from, or oppose their purposes, more certain never to avoid what tends to the attaining them, and by consequence *are in their generation wiser*. Mens practice in those instances (and 'tis the like in others) look them in the face so, that it were a shame to prove it to them; and 'tis as easily discern'd what kind mens wisdom is of, they need no marks to distinguish them. In a word, he that will act wisely in order to those ends and objects which the light of Christianity discovers and proposes, must in every serious action look before him and consider what he purposes and designs by it, and, not giving ear to the suggestions of his prejudices, interests or any passions, shutting out their counsels, think where and what his aims are in it; whether by what he is about to do, he can intend an act of justice, honesty, charity or religion; whether he can do it out of love of God and for his service: or else passing by that, whether it does look another way aside to something else, and then consider, since Almighty God is infinitely just, and will be sure to punish what is grossely done amiss, and eternally reward what is faithfully endeavor'd in his service, whether therefore by thy action thou art going to work towards, and ascertain thy felicity, or not. For if it be to gratify carnality or worldliness, to serve but any present inclination that will call thee off from, or will make thee worse dispos'd for duty, and will not comport with thy designs of Piety and Heaven, then thou art not true to thy own ends, run'st counter to thy own design and everlasting interest; but if thou canst really and in truth intend to do that thing for Heaven and God, on God's name do it, if I say, thou dost intend directly by just means, that being the second property of our wise man, that he pitches on such means as seem most useful and directly tending to his end, which I am next to speak to. And as to this the *Child of Light* is furnisht now with all, that he, who is the Wisdom of the Father and his Everlasting Word, could judge

judge was necessary or conducing to his end, and would prescribe for the attaining it. For however in the state of Heathenism they were much in the dark, both as to vice and virtue, and to the rewards and punishments, and thro the prejudices of their education in a world corrupted wholly both in practices and principles; they fin'd out of piety, and their Religion was their greatest crime: yet he that brought *life and immortality to light*, was himself *'the way,* ^{f John 14. 6.} *the truth and the life*, the true living way to it, sent by his Father to trace out, and walk before us in, that onely true way that can bring us to that Life and immortality. Faith and Repentance make up the whole duty of man. To believe on him, to endeavor faithfully and with sincerity to obey him, and when 'ere we fail, to be humbled for it and amend, these are the true means to attain eternal Life, as God hath by two most immutable things assur'd us, both by Promise and by Covenant, which he seal'd to us in the blood of his own Son, which blood also purchas'd it. And his Word declares infallibly all the Rules of our duty, not in general onely, but oft brought down to particular cases with their circumstances, and resolv'd in most familiar instances. So that as to this part of Wisdom, which consists in pitching upon good means, sure the *Child of Light* is prepar'd as much better than the other, as the Wisdom of God exceeds that of men. 'Tis true the other hath the compass of all Arts, Professions, and all other humane Inventions for his choice, but besides that they are humane, how fantastically are most put upon their course of life as to this world? To some chance does appoint it, others are determin'd to it oft without considering their capacities, whether they can fulfil the obligations of the charge they undertake, are blindly set down; one for example for a Soldier, this a Merchant, one a Scholar, this for Law, that other for the Gospel &c. as if they thought God in the distribution of his faculties and abilities were bound to follow their rash inconsiderate appointments. But be the ways and means design'd well, yet how insufficient they are for the most part for their ends is every man's complaint, who seldom can attain them with all industry imaginable, ^{g Eccles. 9. 11.} *The race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong,* ^{h Psalm 33. 16.} *There is no King saved by the multitude of an host:* the ways to some too are false and slippery and on a precipice, the men that aim at high place often find it, men that build on aire, as others do on water, on the waves, men whose means are most uncertain; so the paths in seas are also to the Merchant, and the winds and weather: some are dangerous too as shelves and tempests to them. So the Soldier's constant conversation is with death too, and *his life is always in his hand*, saith David. Yea many of the means men use are treacherous, false arts, exactions, frauds, injustices, and bribes breed rust and canker in the gold and silver which they get, and *eat the flesh like fire*, James 5. 2. And what is taken from the Alrar hath a live coal in it. And as to the means men use in order to the plentiful enjoiments of their good things, the luxurious oft eats surfet, the intemperate drinks feaver, the incontinent embraces rottenness that eats out his marrow. So that certainly the worldly man that aims at satisfactions of this life by such means, makes the worse choice, and were wiser, if he sought them

them also by those means that tend to life hereafter, to Salvation even in the ways of piety; for as *David* and *S^t Peter* both prescribes, *he that loves life and would see good daies, let him eschew evil and do good.*

But he hath a very obvious objection, it is the most concerning part of wise men in the choice of means to pitch on such as are within their power; for to deliberate about, and to intend impossibilities, is the most horrible instance of folly. Now the man of this world chuseth such means, as humanely speaking, seem within man's power. But the means whereby the Christian must attain his ends he thinks are not so, and he is glad to think so, 'tis Apology, and he had rather have the excuse of God's not giving grace to him, than have the virtue; and 'tis certain truth, that God must give it. *O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, all just works do proceed*, saith our Church. All holy desires, for he prepares the heart that his ear may hearken thereto, his Spirit is the Spirit of supplication, he must intercede in us with grones unutterable, as if men need not set themselves to it, but were to wait for inspiration for it from that Spirit who blows where he listeth. All good counsels also and just works are from him; *For we are not able of our selves to think a good thought, as of our selves, all our sufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. the very preparations of the heart are from him Psalm 10. 17. 'tis he that does touch the heart, 1 Sam. 10. 26. and open it, Acts 16. 14. turn it, Jer. 31. 18. he must draw us, John 6. 44. which if he do not, no man cometh to him; and must give an heart to know him, Jer. 24. 7. give a new heart, Ezek. 36. 26. and in all variety of expression, *a new spirit I will put within you, and will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and cause you to walk in my statute, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.* In a word, he worketh in us both to will and to do, Phil. 2. 13. Now since he onely does all this at his own pleasure, as *S^t Paul* affirms there, therefore 'tis not in man's power: *I know, O Lord*, saith *Jeremy* c. 10. 23. *that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*, no not to his main soveraign end. And in this the worldling thinks he has advantage; but does he not know that he must pray too, as well as labor for his own bread Matt. 6. 11. it is God produceth all in order to it; *He bringeth food out of the earth, and giveth wine that maketh man's heart glad, and bread which strengthens it*, Psalm 104. 14, 15. *He that watereth the hills from his chambers* v. 13. and his clouds drop fatness, he prepares men corn, Psalm 65. 9, 10. &c. 'Tis he that gives us power to get what we have, and he that does not know this, knows not God, Deut. 8. 14, 17, 18. *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, and say in thy heart my power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth; but thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth*, yea he gives it it self, whatever labor we bestow in getting it 1 Chron. 29. 16. *O Lord our God, all this store cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own; riches and honor come of thee* v. 12. *Tu I gave them corn, and wine, and oyl, and multiplied her silver and her gold [even that] whereof they did make Baal, made an Idol.* And God is so jealous of his honor in this particular, that if men do not render this acknowledgment, he threatens to take all away: *Therefore will I return, and take away my*

my corn in the time thereof and will recover my wooll and my flax given to cover her nakedness, Hof. 2. 8, 9. And if he do not take it, he must bless it, otherwise we shall not thrive, shall have no comfort in it; for the blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it, Prov. 10. 22. Without that, bread may stuff us but not nourish, we may have saturity but not have sustenance 1 Hag. 6. 9. for I did blow upon it, saith the Lord. So that for ought appears, if Scripture signify to the men of this world, as here they appeal to it, the means whereby they should attain their Ends seem no more in their power then the others. For as in the order of Grace those general rules to which he hath determin'd the conversion of a sinner; God must work with his means to make them effectual; so in the order of Nature those general rules by which all things in nature are effected; he must prepare the means, and bestow the power, and bless the endeavors, yea and himself give all too, otherwise they also cannot be effectual. Thus he hath in both appointed, that in one and the other we should live with constant application to, and with entire dependence on him in the faithful use of means both in the one and the other order. So that the objection is quite vanisht. 'Tis true tho sometimes God doth blast mens actions so, that do they what they can, they cannot prosper for some secret cause that's unaccountable to us, yet because for the most part in the sphere of Nature, so far as the men of this world diligently use the means, they attain their aims in some measure; therefore notwithstanding all the interest God pleads in these things, they make no doubt but they are sufficiently in their power; much more then those in the sphere of Grace are in that of the Christians, where they have expresse promises of not being disappointed, and are requir'd by most strict and multiplied commands which represent the work of grace as duty. For tho all good desires and Prayers, come from God's good Spirit, and from his preparing of the heart as we saw, yet ⁱ Before thou praieest, prepare thy self, and be not as one that temts God, as one that waits for a particular inspiration to it, one that will not pray without a Miracle. Tho God is said to open Lydia's heart; yet Rev. 3. 20. he dos only knock, and we must open. He turns the heart, and therefore Ephraim praies ^k turn thou me, O God: yet by Ezekiel he saies ^l turn your selves from your transgressions, and bids Judah ^m Return now every one from his evil waies, and make your waies and your doings good. He promises to circumcise the heart Deut. 30. 6. but yet he bids them circumcise the foreskin of their hearts, Deut. 10. 16. He dos engage to put a new heart and a new spirit in them, Ezek. 18. 31. In fine altho he worketh in us both to will and to do as S. Paul says, yet he therefore charges us, Work out your own Salvation, For it is God that worketh in you.

Now when the man of this world thinks all those expressions ⁿ Phil. 2. 12. of Gods workings in the course of Nature are such as yet leave all to him to do, so far, that he were a Fanatic as to worldly interests who without endeavoring in the use of means, should look that God would work out his ends for him, give bread with-

without sowing, nourish without eating, notwithstanding that Scripture dos ascribe to God the intire efficacy: shall the like expressions in the order of grace, leave nothing for the Christian to do, especially when the same endeavors are commanded him too? I know not whether these expressions made to us to turn our selves &c. do make more Pelagians that deny all need of grace; or else ascrib'd to God, make more deny all need of our endeavors, even of our prayers, or of any thing but mere dependance, waiting for his season. Whereas indeed we are to work, because he works and gives means to enable us; and not to use the means he gives us is to tempt him, 'tis to refuse Salvation by the ordinary methods of his workings, & expect new miracle, 'tis to be that fanatic that dos look to live without food. 'Tis gospel truth to say it is not the direction of Gods laws can rule us, nor his promises allure us, nor his threats affright us; but *his Holy spirit must direct and rule our hearts.* Coll. 19. Sun. aft. Trin. and he must *write his laws there* Heb. 8. 10. and he must *give us a heart to love and dread him.* To affirm the other is heresy: and to say that a sinner can dispose himself for his conversion, or that the outward means can by their own moral efficacy turn a sinner, is an heresy against grace, but grace where it hath not been too far resisted, still accompanies the means. Gods word is *the ministration of the Spirit* and of *righteousness*, and his word and Spirit go together *Acts 7. 51.* for to resist one is to resist the other. And if the heart be not by evil education, bad converse and example (great advances these of reprobation) deprav'd, either hardened or made dissolute, or overgrown with principles that choak all God's good seed that can be sown in it, those means so assisted call attention, work some disposition to regard them. The ordinarie means are blest to that end. *Prov. 23. 14. thou shalt heal him with the rod and deliver his soul from hell.* Yea they do it; tho the force of good education have been broken, when these gracious means find congruous soft seasons, lay hold on occasions of calamity or such like; and they move the inclinations, and so make soile prepar'd for God's husbandry. And since experience shews us mere Gentile breeding and converse, if there be but care and parts, can temper, take off, at least moderate all insolence and passion, make men generous, and meek and humble, decent as to all behavior towards God and man, not one ill vicious habit in their practise, but an universal probity upon the face of their whole life; why therefore may not those beginnings of God's workings, which he never fails to carry on for his part, do as much? And if they but keep off ill habits, and by constant practise weaken inclinations to them; here 'tis plain that God's means of grace find not so much resistance, and that which in another state of mind would not have been sufficient, there becomes effectual; especially when with them that work, he works, and as S. James says, *gives more grace* to them that use it, and diverts temptations, enables *to do all things thro Christ that strengthens.* O that the Christian would but try and strive to use his means as heartily as the Child of this world! It is because men
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o Rom. 17.
p 2 Cor 13. 8.

are not so industrious for salvation, answer not the motions of God's Spirit, but neglect grace given, when the worldly man is indefatigable in, and therefore is wiser in order, to his end.

Yet in relation to their proper means in order to their several ends I must confess the worldling does observe the rules of prudence better; the true child of this world for the most part chuseth the prescribed known waies to his end, and do's use the general means and methods of the world, gets into a profession or a place in which if he use false arts, they are trades now, mysteries well taught and known; there are few adventure on untrodden paths: Projectors seldom thrive. But the generality of Christians who would gladly reconcile God and this world, life hereafter with the being well here, do not therefore acquiesce in Gods means only, but make Principles, by-Rules of Conscience, which they guide themselves by on occasions, and have taught themselves to think they are safe waies, and such as do not lead them from salvation.

It is too well known what one sort of men have attempted in this case, how by new rais'd principles of Probability and directing the intention, they have reconcil'd all villany with Christian life, made it safe yea meritorious to lye, forswear, and bear malice, to defame, revenge by either force or treachery, rebel, massacre, drown whole Nations in their own blood, depose or murder Kings. But passing these as monsters in Religion & honest heathen humanity; there are pretenders to some tolerable regard of God and vertue, who on occasions, fit their conscience to their convenience. Besides S. Pauls *good Conscience void of offence to God and man*, there is one of gentility, of Politics, of Honour, of friendship, and a conscience for persons, times and places, one of compliance and one of the mode, one for the interests of a Profession, and the like. I might have nam'd some quite the other way; the Conscience that is rul'd by rouling changeable Principles, which play fast and loose, now strains at Gnats, and now can swallow camels: or a Conscience of caprice, that sets it self strong suddain heats of nice observances sometimes in little things, sometimes in greater, but is firm in nothing. But waving these, and that for Politics too, which is govern'd wholly by reasons of State, which is too nice and high for my consideration; the man of honor makes himself a Principle which will allow him to require reparations for the least affront so call'd; for otherwise what Gentleman would be of Christ's Religion; he can right himself with sword and pistol and with a good Conscience. The conscience for friendship is like that of *Chilon*, whom I mention'd to you, hath a by-rule. And indeed who is there almost that hath the same sentiments or laws for equity and justice in his own cause or the cause of those he is most concern'd for, as in others? They mesure not by the same standard: do not think in conscience the same case is like when it makes against, as when it serves a turn. As for persons, so for times. We have one conscience for the time of health, and one for sickness. Things do not equally seem good or evil in their different seasons. And as for places, *ut vestitum, sic sententiam aliam domesticam, aliam forensem* saith the Orator. Men have their shifts of conscience as of clothes; their dress's carefuller, and their rules stricter much abroad in public, then when at home or out of sight. As

for the conscience of compliance, many do not only do things which they have dislike to, out of compliance, but satisfy themselves because they do them with reluctancy against their inclination, to avoid the being singular or offensive. For the mode too; Men learn to interpret God's laws also by the practice of the age, live and judge by imitation and example. The man's conscience tho it boggle at first sight of dangerous uncomely liberties, yet conversation with them, as it takes away the horror of them, so he thinks it do's the danger and ill influence. And as fashion makes all dressees to be mode and not look uncomely; so the custom of these things makes them seem indifferent. A Conscience also for the interests of a Profession: as in trade for example, and in Corporations of it, it thinks their combinations for the better keeping up the Company fair and honest, and therewithal make tricks and exactions lawful. And in single traders such another principle makes Princes Laws be broken, & their dues stoln without any check of Conscience; and I verily believe that many think these are not inconsistent with a good mind. I might have instanc'd in other professions; particularly in that which satisfies it self in the defending manifestly wrongful, and in right causes, in protracting suits to mens great molestation and the ruin of just rights. But in truth this is paltry trifling with religion, having false weights and mesures of what's lawful and unlawful, things that God abhors: and indeed these frauds will in the end return upon their authors, and the unhappy artist will most certainly deceive his own soul. For he never can arrive at life, whom he that is the way do's not lead thither, Christ and his rules only can introduce us into the mansions of Eternity. 'Tis true there may be doubts somtimes about the way of duty (for 'tis that I speak to) in applying general rules; for circumstances may perplex & vary cases, obligations seem to clash and quarrel, so that one may be uncertain which to follow, what means he should take to attain his great end.

2. Now in case of such uncertainty, as to the means, the Child of this world do's observe a Rule of Prudence better then the Christian, for he takes advice. For who intends to purchase an inheritance but he goes to Counsel, and if there be the least appearance of uncertainty in the Title, spares no charge to have it searcht and to be sure? The least indisposition drives the man that aims at life to his Physician. In every difficulty of a voiage where there's any apprehension of a shelf or rock, the Merchant and the Master will consult the Pilot. But in the voiage towards heaven how many make shipwrack of a good conscience, because they will not commit themselves to any conduct? How often do they shake their Title to God's inheritance, because they will not take advice of him at whose mouth God commanded they should seek the Law? And who do's go to the Physician of Souls to prevent death Eternal? I do not say men should betake themselves to a director in each action of their lives; For who goes to a Doctor to know whether he should eat stones or poison; or who asks a Lawyer whether he should keep or burn his evidences? Now for the most part what I ought to do, what to forbear, is every jot as clear as those, except where circumstances trouble, or else seeming cross obligations amuse our judgment; and then for a man not to ask direction in his way to heaven, is

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unanswerable folly in a man that will inquire the way to the next village; 'tis nothing but a wretchless stupid carelesness in the Eternal interests of his own Soul. When he that takes the best directions he can get with this sincere intent that he may not transgress, may quiet his own mind in this that he hath don his utmost faithfully towards duty, and in doing that with our good God shall be interpreted to have don his duty, if he also faithfully pursue the means directed, the 3^d. property of Wisdom, which does set the man upon the use of those means which he must attain his end by; the last thing I am to speak too.

Now as to this I must confess the Child of this world wiser: and give up the cause. Whoever does resolutely intend his profit, pleasure, honor, or whatever state in this life, 'tis the business of his parts, his study and his whole life to pursue it: and it is so while the appetite of any carnal end is eager in him, Anger, hate, revenge &c. And I cannot say it is so with the Christian as to his end. But the worldly man besides the zeal in using all means in pursuit of his end, he observes two Rules that wisdom dictates, with more carefulness; 1. Be *circumspect*, then *wary*; both prescrib'd us by St. Paul Ephes. 5. 15. *See that ye walk ἀκριβῶς circumspectly, not as fools but wise*, as we translate it; and the Vulgar *caute* warily, with caution. Now the first of these two, Circumspection signifies the looking every way about him to discern, or if he can foresee whatever may obstruct him in his progress, give him any hindrance in whatever shape it is likely to attempt it; whether it do threaten with inconvenience, or do flatter with the deceitful appearances of being useful; come with treachery or open opposition, as a false Friend or a known Enemy: and the other, Caution sets him upon all the care he can make use of to avoid or rid himself of such impediments of what kind soever.

Now 'tis evident the man of this world in whatever occupation, trade, profession, or place he may be, from the lowest to the highest, who proposes any one thing to himself, and does not live *ex tempore* and follow ends and objects as the boy's do Crows, but hath at least some one design, so far as he does so, looks round him, that he may shun every thing that would defeat, divert, or but disturb him in it, and endeavors to move every stone, which he may stumble at in his pursuit, whatever may be an impediment to his attainments.

Now the Child of Light hath warning given him by the wise man also, *My Son if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation*. There are those that will attempt to break his progress in pursuit of any such designment; His enemy the Devil like a roaring Lyon, his false friend the Flesh, and a third (that will assault him under both appearances) the World, sometimes by reproches taunts and insolent scorn, by turning piety and virtue into raillery, discouraging men from the pursuit, sometimes by vexatious molesting, injuring, oppressing good men that they think will bear it, making a prey of the meek, patient and long-suffering, treading under foot the humble; because they know their principles will make them suffer it: and sometimes by invading them with

downright persecution, when duty and Religion are made crimes, true faith and a good Conscience mark men out for ruine. Sometimes on the other side it courts us, shews us all it's glory, it's places, powers, plenties, pomps and gayeties, and so kindles in us the desire of wealth, which is the only way to compass all those; which desire if it touch the heart once, if the world can charm us once with the *deceitfulness of riches* as our Saviour words it Matth. 13. 22. we are quite betraid. For these deceitful riches, tho they are and may be made great instruments of good, and most well minded men, when they are in the way of getting them, imagine they shall do more good with more of them, when they have got them, they deceive them, prove occasions and foment of vices, do not only serve, but grow incentives to those Sins, which men have any inclinations too, yea many times betray them into those they before had no disposition towards, by putting them into their power, and by heightning for them. And however many that possess them, do make blessed use of them, yet those that seek them and endeavor their increase on the account of doing so, to make them help their entry into life, do in our Savior's judgment for the most part so *deceive themselves*, and are as sottish as a man that should get up upon a Camel, to ride thro the eye of a Needle. 'Tis our only wisdom to beware of all temptations. 'Twas Christ's last advice in that agony both of his Love and Sufferings. *Watch and pray that ye enter not into them*; Look about you, give no opportunities to them to approach you undiscern'd, advert still that you may be either able to avoid them, or have time to fortify and call up all the succours Reason and Religion offer, and all those of Grace, which God is ready to bestow upon your prayers, that you may not be surpriz'd and taken unprepar'd; and rather bear & suffer any thing then yield. Whatever 'tis that is most precious to thee, serves thy greatest uses, contributes to thy most charming satisfactions, rather part with it then let it tempt thee. 'Tis our Saviors charge, *if thy right Eye offend, in snare, thee pluck it out and cast it from thee*. It is sad indeed when the Eye that should watch, the organ of Circumspection and with which we should discern the snare to shun it, should it self lead into it, and be it. But 'tis sadder when the snare is dear to men as the usefulest part and most delightful of their senses, when they can no more endure to withdraw from temptation, then to cut off their right hand, or pull out their right Eye, when they use those parts to look about for ruine, and lay violent hands upon the instruments of their Perdition; when they will loose any of those organs rather then not pursue what the temptation suggests, rather cut off a right hand and pull out a right Eye, then not satisfy the appetite it raises, give up all their own aimes, and the worldlings also for that only; loose their Salvation, their God and their own Soul, spend wealth and strength and body, honor and understanding on one sin, that they may become their own ruins here in this life, and the type of their judgment in the life to come. Now these are such instances of folly that the men that practise them and call themselves Christians, are not to be put in the comparison with the
Children

children of this world, who in every part of wisdom are much wiser, in relation to their ends, and to the means they pitch upon, and to the use of those means in pursuit of their intentions: which I undertook to shew.

And then when all their Wisdom is *foolishness with God*, and branded with the worst extremest names of it in Scripture; in what rank of folly stand most Christians? And truly to sum up all, 'tis a most astonishing contemplation how 'tis only in these everlasting interests that most men act without any consideration, as men wholly destitute of understanding, and that could not think. He that hath a journey or a voyage which he must make, and accordingly designs, he takes some thought of fit means of conveyance, and providing whatsoever else is at least necessary for it, never is so sottish as to chuse and prepare a Ship for land, or a Coach for Sea, nor to hire and put himself in any one he meets by hazard, without minding whether it is going and will carry him. Now each man hath a journey to the other World, knows he must make it, and is going on it, and and pretends at least to be assur'd there are two ways to that world; one that leads to felicities which never can dye, and the other to as endless and immortal misery and torment: yet the one of these however dreadful, and the other how desireable soever never enter into his Consideration so as to weigh ought with him, and to incline him in the choice he makes of that way which he walks in all his life long. And tho men know that they approach nearer to that terrible moment every day, and have for ought they know few paces more, but are to step immediatly into one of these two Eternities; yet if you ask them why they go that way they march in, not another, whether they ever minded where that way will lead them: why alas they did not ask themselves that question, may be never yet reflected on it; but their inclinations and affections, the example of converse with others carried them along without consideration whither: these did guide them wholly, and from these they took their sentiments of things and actions, which they follow'd without ever giving heed too, or examining how they came by them, or what grounds of truth or goodness they have for them, but pursued them constantly, and doing so, that while those sentiments remain in them as judgments, and remaining long so and by that becoming prejudices, with them go for Principles; and if ever they be call'd on to reflect upon the way they walk in, being willing out of a desire that's natural to man, and is inbred in him, to justify themselves as much as may be in their inclinations and their actions, they seek reason or colour of it to guild over and beautify the principles they took up so. Thus they come to have their maxims and rules, and so a Conscience which excuses or at least does not reprove their conduct; and so go on confidently, and acquiesce in those, and never take nor ask other direction. Yet these very men will hire a Tutor to direct their footings that they may be to the measures and the rules of Music; will be bountiful and docile & obedient to him, and spend time too in reflecting how to set their paces to the cadences of an aire: so much

more considerable 'tis to dance well then to live and dye well. No guide in that science that must teach them how to be for ever blessed; they march forwards in the way they fall into, in which provided all their appetites be entertain'd well, and themselves diverted, the good company submissive and complaisant, and let them have their will, and rule it, then they go on pleasantly not ever thinking what way they are in or whither going. Much less are they circumspect and wary, watching both their wayes and steps; but rather love to walk amongst, break into snares; and so walking so entangled, their last fatal minute overtakes them: never till then sensible, but then made so by despair, when, as the wise man words it, they *repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, The Righteous we had in derision and a proverb of reproch, we fools accounted his life madness; how is he numbered among the Children of God, and his lot is among the Saints. Therefore have we erred from the way of truth; we have wearied our selves in the way of wickedness, yea we have gon thro deserts. Where there lay no way; but as for the way of the Lord we have not known it. What bath pride profited us, or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are pass'd away like a shadow. For the hope of the ungodly is like a thin froth that is driven away with the storm, but the Righteous live for evermore; the reward of them is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful Crown from the Lords hand. Which Crown God of his infinite mercy grant, &c.*

Wisdom c. 5.

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S E R M O N

XVIII.

THE LIGHT OF THE BODY

is the Eye.

Matt. 6. 22, 23.

*The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thy eye be single ;
thy whole body shall be full of light.*

*But if thine eye be evill, thy whole body shall be full of darknes.
If therefore the light that is in thee be darknes, how great is
that darknes?*

TH N daies that above all others so pretend to light, yet then in which the Church was scarcely ever more involv'd in darkness, wholly overspread with error and confusion, and these new lights prove but like those fires that do mislead them that are overtaken by the night; guide them only out of their way into dangers and precipices, and make them loose themselves in many wandrings; only Religious meteors: It cannot be unseasonable or needless to try what kind of light it is that Christ would have us follow; if all were true those others do pretend, 'twould give them but enlightned brains: but Christs light here will give us shining lives, make our whole bodies full of light; and which light if men want, notwithstanding all their wild illuminations, they are still in the most amazing darkness. *For the light of the body is the eye. &c.*

The words are clearly the former part of a comparison, only hinting at, and leaving us to guess and to draw out the latter; which hath by divers been assign'd diversly. In their direct view they say thus much, The Eye is the candle of the body: that is, as in the body of man the Eye is the director, do's that office to it that a lamp dos in the dark, shews it which way it should walk, what it should do, and by its guidance the body can discerningly set about its offices and perform its functions: and if the Eye be as it ought, pure and right, it directeth well; but if not, the body not being able to discern, not only cannot exercise its functions as it ought, but also may walk on in dangerous errors, and stumble upon precipices into ruin. So also it fares in our spiritual estate. But the particulars thereof are not by all agreed upon, and are very

very variously rendred. The single and the evil eye being exprest by such words as do assure us that a spiritual eye is here intended, yet leaves place for enquiry into what it is: and tho several meanings have been pitch't upon, and but one was meant, yet each having either large authority or reasons, I know not why I may not apply it too, and treat of every one: seeing each way affords us true and good instructions. And first that which hath most generally been adhered to is that the singleness of the Eye should mean the singleness or simplicity of heart, & purity of intention. So *Abimelech* Gen. xx. 5, 6. when he had taken *Sarah* to him, pleads for himself he did it *in the simplicity of his heart*, and God acknowledges he did so; with an honest intention, meaning to make her his wife, not knowing that she was so to another man. And then the second part of the comparison says thus: So also if thy heart be single and sincere, thy intentions right to God, if in all thy actions thou intend his service and Glory, that thy good meaning will derive a goodness into all thy doings, *thy whole body will be full of light*, all thy actions holy; but if thy intentions be vitiated, if in the duties I named before, alms, prayer, fasts thou aime not at my service, but the praise of men, if thy heart be impure, mudded with the desire of earthly things, which I did last forbid thee; thy actions must needs be dark and foul: yea indeed *how great a spiritual darkness*, how much unholiness must needs dwell upon thy doings, if the only thing, that should give light, and shed an holiness into them, thy intentions be dark and evil? To this sense I shall first speak, and divide my text into subjects rather than parts.

1. The first shall be this, the lamp of the body is the eye, a good intention a well meaning must enlighten & direct every action to make it not reprobable.

2. I shall lay before you a single eye, shew you what is required to make a Religious intention singly and purely so.

3. That from such a single eye the body shall be light, that such good hearty meanings do either break out into holy actions, or are accepted as such.

4. That such a single eye makes the whole body light, that by such pure religious intentions a man may sanctify all the actions of his life.

5. The remaining part of the text, *but if thine eye be evil &c.* being but the affirming all the contraries to these of the evil eye, the bad meaning, the intention that is not honest and pure, must needs be prov'd and press'd in pressing of the former part; and therefore that shall only furnish me with application.

First of the first, the candle of the body is the eye, a good intention, a well meaning must enlighten and direct every action to make it not reprobable. I mean in actions that are any way matter of duty, I know only an innocent harmless intention, if there be no other unhandfom circumstance, will serve to make the common actions of life innocent and not blameable; but without the Religious intention the action cannot be accounted duty, and upon this score 'tis in Religion reprobable.

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Among all creatures here below man is the only one that hath a faculty to chuse his ends, & consequently that can direct his intentions. Things without life are carried only to the makers ends, not to their own; the stone however by its own weight it hurry downwards to it's sphere of rest, and as it does approach goes faster still and faster, as if there were it's inclination, and that inclination were more sensible as it came nearer, and so increas'd upon it; yet 'tis determin'd to it's line, 'tis bound to move by plummet, and cannot possibly turn one point aside, not make the smallest crook to meet a nearer knob of earth that stretches up it self to give it soonest rest: and all it's hast is only weight not inclination, not choice, but natural violence as it were. Things that have life and sense, have indeed aims, and these do prosecute those aims with eager strong intentions; but they also are limited, *determinantur ad unum*, as the Schools speak; their end is set to them, nor do they pick and chuse upon comparative considerations; that which strikes their present sense with strongest relish, that they necessarily fix upon: and therefore *Buridan* tells us of an Ass that was so justly plac'd between two bottles of hay of so exact and equal sent and goodness, that neither of them being able to determine his appetite to the one more then the other, his inclinations stood divided equally betwixt those equal invitations, and being not able to prefer, nor consequently chuse any, he wanted both, and two bottles sterv'd him whom one would have preserved. But 'tis not so with man, for as there is as great a difference betwixt his ends as does distinguish Hell from heaven in obedience on one side, and transgression on the other; life and death, eternity of blessedness, and immortality of misery are set before his choice; one of these everlastingnesses sets out it self before every action of his that is not merely indifferent, and offers it self to be his aim. So also he hath (as it mostly proves) a most unhappy privilege, that he can chuse his ruine: and as by the assistance of that Grace, which God does not deny, he can intend those actions that look directly towards happiness; so he can by the power of his will prosecute his own destruction. Now then as for him that can thus chuse his ends, that can direct his intentions either to good or evill, to limit this his freedom to the choice of evill would be most unreasonable; God knows 'tis too much so for him to let the lawful delights of his senses according to their degrees and strengths fix and determine much of his intentions; and to employ his soul to spring and start such pleasures, and let his appetite still hover over them, and the fairest quarry alwaies engage it in the pursuit, tyed to that object that does strike his sense with greatest vigor of temptation: for this is to live merely a life of sense, 'tis to degenerate from man into the rank of lower creatures; for just these are their aims, and so they make their choices: and did God place an immortal and Angelic Spirit in a man only to make him be a more sagacious brute? But then much more then brutish would it be when as two objects court his choice, as different as Hell and Heaven in desireableness; for him to chuse the terrors, to pursue that which carries with it inconsistency to all his happinesses. The beasts

cannot do so, they cannot chuse the worse, but man will preffer misery, and make his choice of wretchedness. And truly thither every action of man does tend, that is not otherwise level'd and directed by honest intentions. It is the meaning that distinguisheth the deeds, and as the mind intends, so it alters the exterior action into good, bad or indifferent. If I do take a walk to the next town, whether I do it for fresh aire and recreation, or else to make a charitable Christian visit, so to relieve or help a weak sick soul, or go to meet companions of my sin and to appoint or execute a vice, the walk is still the same, but those so different ends do make the action tend to consequences of an eternal difference. Nay the aim hath so great an influence upon the deeds, that tho the action be an action of a vertue or Religion, yet according to the quality of the mans meaning that performs it, so it may either lose its vertue, or transmute into a vice, and the very Religion become sin. The first part of this chapter is all demonstration of this: 'tis lawful without question by all good humane means to seek to advance my reputation, but he that does endeavor it by his devotions, tho his life be all strictnesses, and he do spend himself in alms and fasts and praiers, by all these holy practices he does not purchase the reward of piety, but only praise of men; so that all that Religion ceaseth to be holy, and if it mainly aim at that, becomes hypocrisy. And all the reason in the world it should be so; for he that merely in order to his ends does chuse and practise such means, 'tis certain he does love those means no otherwise then as they serve that end, and therefore tho the means be vertue, he does not love the Religion of that vertue, but the convenience of it as it does contribute to his aim. Now if it be convenient to an ill end, 'tis an evill convenience, and so in chusing vertue he chuseth evill; if but to an indifferent end, 'tis an indifferent convenience; and so the Religion becomes insipid and indifferent; and tho there be honesty in the thing, yet 'tis by accident as to his mind, 'tis not for that he chuses it, but for its usefulness; and ordinarily 'tis not that makes it convenient or useful for ends, or if it do, yet the appearance of it is as good as it is it self; and so 'tis clear, howsoever he chuse vertue, yet the vertue hath no interest in his performance, not in his intention, nor election. Thus he that is charitable to one in distress on purpose to oblige him afterwards for some designs he hath in using him, he does contract, not give, and 'tis not alms, but commerce, 'tis rather earnest of wages, then a liberality. She that abstains from vicious and suspected company, and observes strictest chastity merely to avoid an ill name or worse consequences, does not fear God, but shame and being undone, and 'tis not vertue this but care of reputation: she's no more chaste as to the Religion of it, then she that does abstain from places suspected of diseases, that would spoil her face or do her other injury: she does avoid uncleanness, as she does small pox or breaking of her limbs; and she that will not lame or deform her self is every jot as vertuous. They that make long praiers for a pretence to cover their devouring widows houses, that their opinion of their Religion

gion may palliate some other wickednesses they have; their prayers only pull down woes upon them *Matth. 23.*

They that go to the place of Gods Worship and Service and to the exercises of devotion, intending there to offer up some eyes and thoughts to some object, which their vicious inclinations have service for, their very Religion is Idolatry; and truly they who do good actions to an ill intent, their wickedness is multiplied, they do not only sin in the intention, but they defile the means, they make Piety serve their vice, and Christ Minister unto Belial. Occasion enough to persuade us to look to our intentions, and have a care our meanings be purely and singly religious; which when they are I am now next to shew you.

Now for this intentions may be considered either precisely in order to the end they aime at, without taking in the consideration of the means, by which I must prosecute that end; as for instance, from this time forward I intend strictly and duly to observe my private and the public hours of prayer; nothing but such an occasion, as God shall interpose, shall hinder me. Or I intend according to my ability to practise charity to the distressed. Or secondly the man considers also what means there are for him to pursue that intention, and chuseth what he thinks the most convenient, and by that means intends to compass his designs. So in order to my constant keeping prayers, I will be sure to rise so early, as that the haste of any business I shall have, shall not hurry me from my private morning devotions; I will be up timely enough for both: and I will so and so order my business of the day, and so cut off, or so dispose my pleasures as that they shall not enterfere with prayers, shall not intrench on my Religious hours, but doing so and so I will have void spaces left for them, that are so much more my concerns; and will not suffer trifles to detain me from them; or from any part, such as I may easily shake off, or defer for so much better interests then trifles, as the business of my prayers is; which yet truly 'tis to be doubted they do scarce believe, that let trifles turn them either from all or part, or slacken them in coming. And for my charity I do intend out of such my revenue, or my wages, or out of the superfluity of my expences (from which I do discern I could spare something, and be never the worse) to lay aside constantly for the uses of that virtue. And so any man intends to set upon the serious practise of sobriety and temperance or chastity; and then considers that 'tis necessary for him to avoid such and such engaging practises, or such and such tempting companions, and occasions, and thereupon intends that too: where we see the means come in with the end to make up the intention; as where they do not, God knows the bare intention of the end is but imagination and fancy.

1. Now as to both these intentions: First for the precise intention of the end; that in religious aims that may be single and pure, I must 1. take heed that neither temporal nor vicious aims do mixe in any degree with my Religion in my thoughts, nor that the pious meaning do decline unto any such intention. For any either mixture or defilement, makes a thing not pure and single.

Do not mistake me, temporal ends such as profit, recreations; reputation are not only lawful, but necessary for our intentions, provided they do not transgress their bounds of time or measure, but they must not in any degree come into your obediences to God. To intend both in that, were to endeavor that which Christ saies we cannot do, 'twere to serve God and Mammon, or God and pleasure, or the Lord and Honor: yea 'twere to serve them with the Lords Religion, to make the very worship of my God be the Idolatry of my covetousness, 'tis one of the worst kinds of sacrilege to alienate his own service from him. Nay I must take a care that an intention piously begun, do not decline into any degree of such meanings. I may out of a real sense of my imperfections or detestation of some of my former practises begin a confession, and complaint against my self, and have the thoughts of emptiness and of humility of heart, when this intention springs within me, but if I then find some have a better opinion of me for it, and speak well of my modesty or my humility, and that opinion do begin to tickle me, that air to fill me (and I shall easily discover it, if there be any thing of such an aim, for if I cannot well endure another should say that of me which I say my self, then it is sure that my confessions were either dissimulation, or fishing after praise:) here the humble intention declines, & now 'tis time to have a care and turn my thoughts from other mens opinions to my own guilty consciousness.

So for vice, if the same confessing man acknowledg sadly former loosenesses, or out of a good meaning tell some story to aggravate the vileness of such fault, and doing this before a female auditor makes her pleas'd with the expression of it, and as she begins to like the person for the story, so the contagion spreads, and the relator from such a liking (as it quickly will) contracts a mutual kindness, and refreshes decayed desires; here the good meaning is sunk and drown'd in sin; *desinit in piscem*, 'tis but a Mermaid intention, the fair upper part, however beauteous, ends in monster, the Saint declines into a feind.

2. If none of this, yet if I can foresee some casual unconcern'd evil accident will happen and come in; then I must either free my good intention from that, or change it. If I intend to reprove my Superior towards whom I have some office of so doing, for his vice, and do foresee that probably upon that his just respect and authority may decay with some others; I will then take some other way of doing it. If by aggravating the guilty hainousness of some practices of those that do profess the strictness of Religion, I can guess my doing so will cast a dash upon the profession of Religion it self in the esteem of some that hear me; I will forbear a good of so ill consequence, except such aggravation be necessary upon some other score, as to take off the opinion of those that may be mislead by those persons into guilt.

If I foresee my laying open of a false opinion (provided that it be not fundamental as to practise) in a man of pious learning and of reverend esteem, may chance to stagger the beliefs of some that must receive their knowledg from instruction and cannot do it better

better then from such; and make them think alas from whom shall we learn truths, or what assurance have we that any thing we have given credit to is so: sure my intention is more noxious then his false opinion and to be turn'd aside.

If by telling a true story intended for the disparagement of vice, I think aspersions may come upon a person (which are not at all necessary for my hearers avoiding of the vice,) yea tho he be mine enemy, the story and my intentions would be much better spared.

A meaning then is purely good, when it hath nothing else but good in view of it; and that intention is not truly single, that hath two ends, altho but one be mine, and the other chances only; for if I foresee it, I some way adopt it, and do make it mine. So for the first intentions.

2. The intire intentions as they take in the means succeed into our consideration; and here I would be plain because I know it is the common plea and ground of most whereby they excuse actions otherwise very blameable by saying that they did it with a good intent: and this they think will stop the mouths of their implainers and their conscience. On this score Phineas's zeal is grown a Christian principle (tho the like zeal were blamed by Christ in his disciples) yea and that stretcht now much beyond the original; such a zealous intention shall execute real murders, and all the bloody hainous consequences of a war undertaken upon no other appearing ground: when not upon a visible confest Idolatry, and impudent whoredom, as that in Phineas's case, but upon only controverted doubts, or indeed fancied stains in an established happy Church; their zealous intention must warrant them to let out those taints together with the life, to blood them with the sword; and if they cannot call for fire from Heaven to purge away the dross, yet they will make the reformation with fire and faggot, prune the worship by cutting up both root and branch: *Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum.* And Religion must perswade and warrant all these mischeifs.

A like good meaning shall engage men to defy the persons and authority of their most just Superiors, to both which they were bound by laws and oaths; but they are nothing to a good intention: and while they prosecute the ruine of their Governors, and desolation of their Nation, yet they can mean well to them both, and be still innocent.

So the ends of self-preservation, or which is much worse, preservation of a little wealth or dignity, shall justify perjury and doing things against the conscience: and those things look't upon as slight transgressions in order to that end, when the pride of an estate, or of a wife and family is in the intention.

I could make divers other instances in common actions of our lives, in which whatever men do practise, if they have a good meaning, they believe themselves excusable. Therefore

1. That an intention may be good, 'tis absolutely necessary, that it do not take in any forbidden means to bring about its end; for if it do, however the end were good, the intention will be sinful.

The reasons clear, because that particular intention do's especially respect and include that particular means; which means is evil, that is to say, it do's especially respect and include evil, and consequently is so. Nay if I use ill means, tho to advance an end of noblest Religion, yet in so intending that intention do's not do God service, nor obey his commands for it is impossible that the same action of the mind should in it self be both commanded and forbid by God.

Now as the intention takes in and pursues the evil means so 'tis forbid, and consequently is a sin, and therefore cannot be service to God nor obedience to his command. If that this reason will not do, example and command shall do it. *Saul did intend to sacrifice when he did spare the fattest of the sheep and oxen: 'tis true he was commanded to slay all, but he intended to preserve the best for God, his meaning was Religion and worship; but yet that good intention of worship did condemn him, and he and his posterity lost the Kingdom for this Religion.*

God do's not require any action, which he sees I cannot compass without sin; for he requires no man to sin, for that were to require that we should break his commands, and 'twere a strange obedience to the Lord to disobey him for his own sake; *shall I speak wickedly for God, saith Job, Job. 13. 7. and talk deceitfully for him? will ye accept his person?* and plainer yet S. Paul. *Rom. 3. 5, 6, 7, 8. But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man.) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded thro my lie unto his glory; why also yet am I judged as a sinner? And not rather as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil, that good may come: whose damnation is just.* The argumentation runs thus, If Gods way of grace may be thus set out, and more illustriously seen by the sins of men; why should God thus punish their sins which so tend to his glory (I recite the objection of some men) or if he do's, is it not injustice in him so to doe? v. 7. For (say they) if the faithfulness, and mercifulness of God in performing his promises to *Abraham* giving the *Messiah* hath appear'd more abundantly, and tended more to his glory by occasion of the Jews sins or infidelity, there will be then no reason why they that are guilty of such sins so much tending to Gods honor should be complained of or proceeded with in judgment; but on the other side men might do well to commit such sins, from which so much good or glory to God might come. I recite, saies the Apostle, a damnable doctrine, and in opposition say, that no one sin is to be committed, tho in order to and contemplation of the greatest good, Gods glory. And this is proof enough, and therefore

2. tho an intention that sets it selfe an holy and Religious end, the glory of God, the purity of Religion, the peace and flourish of Jerusalem, nay Church and nation, or some particular service to God, while it looks only at the end is good and holy, yet when it comes to think of means in order to that end, if he can find there is only one within his compass, and that forbidden, as he

is bound to renounce the means, so also he must desert the intention instantly: for if he go on to intend good, which he knows he cannot compass but by doing ill, 'tis clear he do's intend the doing ill; as he that knows it is not possible, that he should shoot at such a mark, behind which a man stands, but he must kill the man, if he intend to shoot, he do's intend to kill. No, he may pray for such an end that God would find expedients to bring it about, but must not set wickedness on work to do it; God do's not need the aids of sin to promote his glory or service. And therefore

3. A truly Religious intention of a good end purely as it is good cannot suffer a man to chuse an evil means of working towards it. It is not possible that he should do it; for he that do's chuse a means unto an evil end, intends it only as 'tis useful to that end, and otherwise he could not like nor pitch upon it; but sin cannot be useful to a vertuous action as it is vertuous, but perfectly repugnant to it. I may exact, and gripe, oppress deceive, and many more such things, that so I may be rich, and have to give to them that want; but I cannot do those things truly intending the Religion of charity, because that would not suffer me to do them. Those actions are perfectly contradictions to its nature, they ruinate the very being of a vertue, as it is in obedience to God; for a man cannot disobey God in obedience to him, and therefore are not useful to it, as it is a virtue, nor chosen so but on some other motive. The man that heaps by fraud and by oppression intending to build hospitals, intends thereby to build himself a monument, and leave as great a name behind him, as he do's treasure may be, but if he truly had intended charity, he had not been uncharitable for charity.

The man that do's intend to be a daily constant person in the public exercises of Religion, and travail up and down to get the opportunities, if when he do's begin to think how he is to prosecute those intentions, and so considers that then he must neglect his calling, greatly and impoverish, may be break himself and family, if he then set down with himself; I may allow my self some arts of thriving, take ways of getting greater gains in my commodities then are fit for others that do not give God so much of their time; or I will restrain my hand as to the poor; for if Religion to God take away so considerable a part of what I should gain, charity to the poor, hath no reason to have a great share too in what I have; and so leave off to be a doer, that he may be a hearer, or do that which is not justifiable, use some deceitful methods, or be not merciful (and these are no strange things they say) 'Tis clear this man do's not intend towards the real power of religion, for that would not allow him such waies to it, which are so far from useful to it, that they are perfect oppositions to its nature, but either the repute of a professor, or the being own'd as of a party, or some such motive lurks under the visor of Religion; it may be undiscern'd by him who minds that fair appearance of a good end, so intently as not to search, and try the whole intention, the means as well as aim. For such means, however they may contribute to the action of Religion and vertue in the general, yet they

they cannot be useful to the Religion, or the vertue of the action, nay do they not contribute sin more then their own to the intention? 'Tis a hard question; and tho indeed it be apparent, that he that chuseth an ill way only to bring about a good intent; do's not like or chuse that ill for it self, and would not embrace it if it were not drest and varnisht with the adornments and the paint of a well meaning, and consequently is not so malicious, as they that chuse sin barefac't in its own shape and colours; yet when to do so is so directly against the very nature of piety, against reason and command, and hath so harsh a sentence as *S. Paul* do's thunder out against them, that shall entertain such a doctrine, that truly I do not know what to say to them, that notwithstanding that dare practise it. I'me sure the wise man saith *Eccles. 34. 26.* *He that bringeth an offering of the goods of the poor, doth as one that killeth the Son before the Fathers eyes; an offence that to the Father, that hath more then his sons death in it, it strikes him also thro the eyes and would make his own sight his murderers, do's make it to be his torment, and defies his displeasure, chusing to spite him to his face: and some such aggravation it should seem vice carries in it, when it comes into Religion, as it do's, when it thrusts into our holy intentions, as means to pious ends. However it be, I'me sure I've said enough to prove that truly good intentions cannot take in evil means, and that such means when they are taken in, make the intention mixt and unholy, and therefore far from pure: and so have don the second thing, and let you know what is required to make a Religious intention singly & purely so. The third follows*

3. That from such a single eye the body shall be light, that such good hearty meanings do make the actions good and holy, or are accepted as such actions. The former part, that actions regulated by intentions compleatly Religious are Religious, needs no proof; because our actions derive their guilt or their Religiousness from thence: there can be nothing there to blame; for when the end is good, and the means good, then all is so. But I would tell you such intentions have a privilege beyond this of making outward actions acceptable to the Lord: for where we do endeavor in pursuance of such intentions, and cannot bring them into act there those intentions are in Gods sight as the actions themselves, he do's so value them, and so he will reward them. For God accepts the will for deed, *and if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not, 2 Cor. 8. 4.* Here thy good meaning if it put forth it self according to thy power is compleat performance; here is a way the meanest soul may be an Heroe in Religion: there is no bounds that can be set to holy meanings. My actions may be fetter'd in, ty'd by impossibilities, that I cannot perform such holy deeds as others, but my intentions are free as Angels; I can mean heartily and intend to the utmost, and by such an art the poor widow, that gave nothing but the expression of the meanest poverty, did yet give more then they that bestow'd treasures, because in two mites she meant to give her utmost; and at such rates God will reward them too.

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Those good intentions that sincerely mind Gods glory shall themselves reap glory, even before the action shall. From resurrection to eternity is time enough to reward holy actions, but before that, betwixt death and judgment, the soul shall be rewarded with the blessing of its intentions. As it did often do its part in piety without the body, so it shall have a crown before the body, shall forestal happiness, and for a while it shall alone be blessed, as oftentimes it hath been vertuous alone in good intentions, when it could not act.

4. But all this is not strange, that the great mercy of our God should so interpret to our advantage our designs of piety, as to impute good meanings to our glory as if they were good doings, and consequently where the intentions are holy, the actions must be holy, and where this eye is clear, the body must have light: but 'twill be very strange if a clear eye make the whole body full of light, illustrate those performances which have no relation to the soul. Most of the actions of our life are common and indifferent, serve only the necessities or recreations of nature, and how can these be holy? Why yes, by pure Religious intentions a man may sanctify all the actions of his life, and if *thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

Whether you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God, saith S. Paul 1 Cor. 10. 31. Every therefore the most common action may be intended to Gods glory, and then 'tis sanctified. That the Lord should look for honor from the devout performances of our strictest Religion, 'tis no wonder, for therefore he requires them: but that when in the meanest instance I do serve my self, in doing so I should be able to give glory to my God, is sure by vertue of some strange stratagem, some Divine elixir that will so transmute things: why a good meaning will do this. To shew thee how, when thou goest about the employments of thy lawful calling, have but good thoughts about thee, good intentions in them, and the actions of thy calling are for the uses of grace, and thy necessities do prove thy vertue. As for instance, when thou laborest do but consider to what pains sin hath put thee, sells thee thy bread for sweat; for if man had not sin'd, *Eden* had furnish'd him with all the delicacies of Paradise, without his care or contribution, and he had had the fruits of the tree of life without the pains of planting any thing: 'tis sin that gives thee all this toil; and then do but resolve to use this as an argument to thy self to make thee hate the cause of so much trouble: I will sure labour most against that, which hath so chang'd and debas'd my condition, and which do's aim to make me far more miserable to eternity. If I am weary of my work e're night, what shall I be of everlastingness of torment? If little thirsty heats and drops of sweat offend me, what will unquenchable feavors, and what a lake of brimstone? And think again upon the mercies of thy God, who offers thee at the rate of easier endeavors the food that lasteth to eternal life; the calling of a Christian being the least painful, and yet it brings the greatest fruits, the price of that high calling being blessedness, if thou but labor in it.

If thou be sustaining the necessities of nature in meat and drink, look up to him that do's provide for them, and resolve only not to use his blessings to his dishonor by excesses, not to spew his mercies out into his face again; but use them as assistances of nature to enable thee for such employments as his providence hath assign'd to thee.

And in thy recreations also do but take notice thankfully how God hath provided for delights too, how he hath not only brought forth *bread to strengthen man*, but *wine to make his heart glad*, and *oyl to make him a cheerful countenance*, and instruments of sport to delight him: and but acknowledg all these things to God, and intend with thy self to use them only to his ends. Thy calling either to provide for thy subsistence here, that thou may'st serve him, or to do good to others. Thy meals for preservation of that life which he hath lent thee for his uses; and recreations for refreshment and for health; and make no doubt if nothing do interpose to spoil these instances, that thou art serving God in all of these, that thy most secular actions are thus made spiritual employments by being dedicated so to God undertaken in his fear, and intended for the uses of his providence: so that if whensoever thou art going about any thing, thou do but ask thy self, why thou do'st set upon it, and can'st but make a good intention look towards it, and resolve only to let it serve such ends, resolve not to transgress in it the bounds that God hath set thee either of time or measure, and to make all subordinate and to assist towards piety some way or other; and then sometimes with eyes lift up, call for, and look for a blessing down upon thee in it: and by this means the action is sanctified, so thou dost consecrate thy deeds to God and he accepts thy meaning in it, as an offering to him, the action is adopted into the stock of Religion meant to God, and so thy whole life may be made pious by such good intentions, and thus thy single eye makes thy whole body full of light.

And this consideration alone might apply it self with pressingness upon us. Shall I think God not easy to be serv'd when I may teach my recreations to serve him? Shall I think Heaven placed out of my possibilities, when I can learn my sports to wing me towards it? Religion sure is not so very difficult, when a good honest meaning can transmute every action of my life into Religion; and then who would not at such easy rates change his employments, which he must do, and his sports which he will do, into pieties; when it is don by putting good intentions into them, by good thoughts and ejaculations engaging God along in them? But the last words do urge an application which I promised in one word.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body is full of darkness. My brethren, if ill intentions have so destructive an influence upon our actions, that when the end is foolish, tho the action I practise be a vertue, yet that aim do's defeat it of its vertuosness, it loseth all its tast of piety, and an ill end do's debase it into vice, as I have prov'd; and so for want of a good meaning I either lose my Religion, or my Religion becomes sin unto me: Unhappy I that when with such inten-

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tions I practise duty, I lose the pleasures or the profits of the sins I might have practis'd every jot as innocently ; and much more usefully, as to those ends ; and I lose the duty, and by the very duty I purchase condemnation ; enjoy neither the vice I do omit, nor yet the piety I practise, nor any thing, but the sad sentence of *they have their reward.*

And on the other side, if my ends be never so pious, if I intend to compass them by unlawful means, and do evil tho that good may come thereof, what do's the justice of my ends do for me, but only make damnation just to me ? Alas ! then in one word what is their doom, who do by evil means intend to compass evil ends, whose intentions are intirely singly wicked, that design only the pleasures or the profits of iniquity, that level directly at sin both all the way and at the mark too, whose aimes and whose contrivances, are wickedness, they purpose such an evil action, and care not by what means they compass it, so they acquire their ends ? Our Savior had no way to express the condition of these, but that of an admiring question : *If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness ?* The Sinner notwithstanding all his pomp of shine and splendor, that he thinks himself cloth'd with, dress'd up with gilded profits or with a glory of pleasures ; yet he is still in the dark, his life is all night, and that condition, which three days made intolerable to Egypt, is always on the Sinners soul ; he is envelop't in thick *darkness* like theirs *that may be* felt by any thing but by a soul of such stupidity as the sinners is ; a darkness such as Christ had not a fit word for, nor did know how to phrase but by being astonish't at it. *How great is that darkness !* a state indeed that is most proper for his deeds and intentions of darkness that need a night to cover them : a darkness, that do's border on the regions of utter darkness, that shall never have any dawne, but such as flaming brimstone strikes into it : and O *How great is that darkness ?* O blessed Savior, who art the day spring from on high, that came to visit us, deliver us from those dark regions. O thou Eternal Sun of righteousness that camest to enlighten the darkneses of the world by thy example and by thy doctrine, and the illuminations of thy Holy Spirit, let these thy methods shine powerfully upon our souls to scatter all the clouds and mists that dwell upon our hearts ; that we may have no misapprehensions of our duty, that our intentions may be clear, our affections pure, and all our actions regular and holy. Wee know, O Lord, we were created for thy glory, and our own eternal happiness : We beseech thee direct all the purposes of our minds, the inclinations of our hearts and actions of our lives unto these blessed ends. Teach us to mind thee in every thing we do, that so whatever we shall do in our whole lives, may work towards our future happy life. Let no unholy aims mixe with any of our actions, no forbidden contrivances or purposes creep into, and make sinful our performances. Let not self-ends of pride, vain-glory, gain, revenge, or any vice make our Religion hypocrisy or sin, nor any poor low ends of little pleasure or of profit rob the actions of our callings or recreations of that Religion, which a good intention may put into them : but

make all our actions so orderly and temperate, and so subordinate to holy ends, that they may all turn into duty: make us heartily intent on our Religious performances in their seasons, and submitting all our other works to the occasions of Religion, and making them serve and assist towards it, and thereby become Religion; that so our whole lives may be consecrated unto thee, and our whole conversation become holy. And do thou prevent us in all our doings with thy most gracious favor, and further them with thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name, and after an age of doing so may be glorified with thee in thy Kingdom, thy power and thy glory for ever &c.

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S E R M O N

XIX.

THE LIGHT OF THE BODY

is the Eye.

Matt. 6. 22, 23.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evill, thy whole body shall be full of darknes. If therefore the light that is in thee be darknes, how great is that darknes?



What is observ'd of the lights of our daies that they still abound in their senses; will appear true of the light in the Text: and indeed 'tis but proper, that it should have that most excellent quality of light still to communicate it self without decay, to pour out fresh streams every moment, and yet be still the same: one of the rivulets we have exhausted in the last daies discourse; and we shall also find that in another sense *The light of the body is the eye.*

Amongst the divers things to which the Eye in the Text may have Analogy, and which may make Christs Aphorism here true in the spiritual sense, as well as in the outward literal; the second and indeed in my apprehension much more proper then that I have already given, tho not so general, is *Conscience*; that Eye of the mind in order to practice, from which alone and nothing else in matters of Religion the actions have all their direction and guidance; and which so far as it is clear and well informed, the actions that are regulated by it are all full of light and Piety: and on the other side so far as the Conscience is amiss, so far the mans deeds must of necessity be dark and evil. And that I may now for all say, without discussing every minute particular Analogy, 'tis for this that the expressions of *blindness of mind, understanding darkened, and sins being call'd darknes*; and on the contrary holiness *light*, and the *Eye of the understanding enlightened*, are so frequent in the Scripture, to let us see the whole comparison is good. For to declare to you that the Conscience may be properly set out by the Analogy of an eye, I need but tell you this eye of the mind is in the little world the frame of man, the true deputy and Vicegerent

of that universal and allseeing eye of Providence and inspection: for as that eye of inspection spies all our waies, watches over all a mans motions, inclinations and thoughts; and as the eye of Providence guides and directs every thing to its ends; all this the Conscience do's in man: 'tis privy to every little rising of the appetite, it knows each bending of the will. There is not any closet, no recess in the whole heart, where the soul can retire to think of, wish, or design any thing, but this same Eye of Conscience looks in, beholds it all, and lays it up. And Conscience also is the under-Eye of Providence in man, it prescribes to all our actions, it leads the will that *potentia ceca*, and gives directions to all that man attempts or do's in matter of Religion. *Thy word*, saith David, *is a lanthorn to my feet, and light to my paths*, and it is certain Gods Commandments are the light we are to walk by, except we will walk on in darkness unto the land of utter darkness. But as a lanthorn is no guidance to the blind, and a light is of use only where there is an eye; so Gods commandments can have no influence upon, nor give direction or assistance to our waies except this eye of the mind be enlightned by them; for it is Conscience that is the conveyance to all duty to the heart of man, that cannot set up obedience, but as the Conscience do's press it on it, that conveys the immediate obligation. My Conscience tells me this I must forbear, that I must practise. Yea where there was no law to give direction, the eye of Conscience looking o're the frame of man, a creature reasonable in his making, could strait see a necessity of doing things agreeable to right reason; and viewing the materials of the pile saw he was built of Soul as well as body, of of an immortal Spirit, as well as a carnal part, knew that his life was to be order'd to the uses of the Spirit, as well as of the flesh: (and more indeed that being the better part) and easily could gather hence, that man was not to serve his lower brutish part the body, so as to discompose his soul, and when it did so did condemn him for the doing of it. And upon this S. Paul affirms. Rom. 2. 14, 15. *When the Gentiles that have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, they having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves, which shew the work of the Law written on their hearts, their Conscience bearing them witness.* Which says that tho the rest of the world had not the Revelation of Gods will, and Law as the Jews had, yet from the dictats of their reason, and the notions of good and evil implanted in them, their conscience did oblige them unto the performance of such things as the Law required, and upon such performance or omission without any other Law did either excuse them, as men that did not culpably wander out of those paths, which the light and Eye that God had planted in them, did direct them in; or else accuse them as transgressors, and render them obnoxious to punishment. And so it did before the Law. So Rom. 5. 13, 14. *For until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed where there is no Law, Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adams transgressions.* First after Adams time till Moses before the giving of the Law men sin'd, and tho
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it be true that sin is not charg'd to punishment but where there is a Law to forbid it under that penalty, and therefore it might be thought that sin without the Law would not have brought death into the world, yet from *Adam* till *Moses* death reign'd, men died that had not sinn'd as *Adam* did against an express actual precept promulgated, as his was, and establish't with a positive threat of death: but died because they had sinn'd against the laws of their nature, the principles of duty that were put into their making, which Conscience prest upon their practise and whose guidance they would not follow, they pull'd death upon themselves in the errors of their waies.

'Twas by the equity of this that when *the wickedness of men grew great in the earth*, the flood grew so too: an inundation of waters overspread it, when sin had once don so, and iniquity against the dictates of conscience struck all the world at once with death, except eight persons. Conscience therefore where there is law, and also where there is none, is the great director of our actions; and to this I shall apply our Saviors discourse dividing not the Text but Conscience, and in the several members verifying what our Savior hereaffirms.

1. Conscience either respecteth actions to be don, or actions already don. First as it respecteth actions to be don, telling us this we must do, that we must forbear, so first as it answers to the single Eye, it denotes the pure Conscience the enlightned *Eye of the mind* as *S. Paul* calls it, that is a truly well inform'd Conscience, a Conscience that judges according to its rule: and to this I shall first tell you what is the entire rule of conscience, and consequently when its dictates are right, when it informs me truly this I must do, that I must forbear.

2. Prove to you that all our actions that are regulated by such a well inform'd conscience are good and honest; so that if this eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light. If the conscience be pure, the man's holy, and so the first part of the text is proved.

2. As it answers to the evil eye, so it denotes an evil conscience, a conscience that do's not give true judgment of duty, ill inform'd. And this either First wholly so, and then 'tis *reprobate sense*; such as that of them that call good evil and evil good, from which men are stild *κακων τριασμινοι τω σωειδοντι* 1 Tim. 4. 2. or *αποωιδοντι*, that is *αποωιδοντι*, saith *Phavorinus*, Rom. 1. 31. Or secondly but in part, and then 'tis either first an erring conscience, or secondly a doubtful conscience, or thirdly a scrupulous conscience, to which also several others will fall in. And I shall shew you how every of these do's mislead a man into the dark. The scrupulous raiseth clouds and mists about him, dark errors and discomforts too: the doubtful do's instead of guiding leave him so puzl'd, that he knows not which way to be-take himself; and the erring conscience lights him into the pit, takes him by the hand to thrust him down, guides him into a necessity of sin; and the no conscience, the reprobate sense, it is a darkness somewhat worse then that, the blackness of Hell here. All this I shall do in order.

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Upon the other part conscience as it relates to actions already don, so it do's testify, and in so doing *either excuse or accuse* Rom. 2. 15. Now the conscience in the other former respect hath indeed the greater influence upon our practise, and so to it the text do's more directly answer: yet this latter having some also in order to the making future actions holy by repentance, (for when once the soul hath shipwreck't on a sin, and she is ready to sink and perish, there is no plank on which she can escape but repentance.) Now 'tis this Eye that must look out for that; 'tis an accusing conscience that must set him upon Repentance: this hurry's him about and will not let him rest, till he get upon the plank that's fastned to the Anchor, even the Anchor of hope, by which until it be secur'd, a good conscience never is at quiet. Because I intend to say but little to this, I shall dispatch it now. And that in order to its actions excusing and accusing.

And first if conscience be the Eye: then a clear single eye is a clear conscience; and then of that it must be true that it do's make the man full of light; and so it do's indeed as light do's signify joy and gladness, and so it often do's in Scripture *Psalms* 4. 6, 7. And truly the applauses of an honest undeceiving heart, that is conscious to it self of cordial endeavors after good, and knows it neither had ill ends nor ill means, they shed comforts beyond all that the earth can give, they shed *the peace of God that passeth understanding*. If my conscience be clear, let my condition be never so overcast, never so dark and cloudy, yet do I live in shine. This is the only thing that makes every estate glad some: If my condition be low pressing adversity, yet if my conscience assure me 'tis not my fault that threw me down into it, my sin did not put out the light of Gods candle of prosperity that before shone about me; but rather because I would hold fast my duty, and would not let go a good conscience, therefore I was thrown down with them into deep affliction, here my conscience assures me I am in a case which S. James bids me *count all joy* Jam. 1. 2. and which our Savior do's call *blessed* Matth. 5. 11. S. Peter tells me: *If ye be reproched for the name of Christ (and 'tis so for all duty) happy are ye; for, the spirit of Glory and of God resteth on you*, 1 Pet. 14. 14. What if I be in *the place of Dragons*, my conscience do's assure me 'twas my duty not guilt did put me there, that is, God brought me thither, and he is with me there: *the Spirit of God resteth on you*. What if I be in darkness and *dimness of anguish*, encompass't with the *shadow of death*, the *Spirit of Glory* resteth on me. And then, sure a clear conscience makes the man full of light, when it makes him full of glory: when in his darkest solitudes there do's break in the light of Gods countenance.

Let them be sadden'd with afflictions, who understand no delight but in carnalities, whose souls are married to some little comforts of this world. Adversity indeed sweeps all their joys away at once, a cross throws blacks upon them strait, their hearts in mourning instantly. But he that understands the comforts of a good conscience, and knows where to find them, and hath a treasure of them in his breast, will soon be able to allay the other sadnesses.

What can I want while I have *a continual feast*, for so is a good con-

conscience? It is not in the power of words to express the happiness of this blisful state. It is *the peace of God which passeth all understanding*; Phil. 4. 7. and tho' felicity seems to be measur'd by our perception of it, here we are happy beyond the scanty limits of our narrow apprehensions, do not take in the beatific object, but are our selves enclos'd, and *enter into the joy of our Lord*, Matt. 25. 23.

2. In order to the second act, accusing; if conscience be an eye, then the well qualified eye is the tender conscience. I mean not in the modern sense, not only as it is accompanied with, but as 'tis but another word for a weak Judgment and a proud heart; sturdy opposing private opinion or phancy against public authority. And whereas conscience is said to be the eye of the soul, a tender conscience has the same importance in this case, as when we call a blear or bloudshot, a tender eye. A gentle word for a troublesome malady. The innocent importance of the word is that which denotes, besides weakness in judging, quickness in perception; for conscience is the judgment of the mind concerning actions, and whatsoever is tender is weak; but a conscience which is such, as tender things are alwaies, is sensible of every the least touch of guilt, checks at whatsoever we do amiss, the least thing we do is a wound to it. This is the tender conscience. Such a one as is deeply sensible of the majesty, and power, and justice of Almighty God, and the fatally provoking guilt of sin; fears alwaies, doubts and trembles, foregoes lawful enjoyment, lest they should prove to be unlawful, and flies from every not only approach, but even appearance of evil. This is an uneasy state, but the inconvenience is abundantly repaid by the safety it procures, whilst this flaming sword that turns every way, guards both our Paradise and us, and suspicions render us secure. But if my heart grow hard, not tender, and my conscience insensible, there is no hopes of cure.

I shall content my self with this one instance in answer to the evil eye as it relates to both these actions of accusing and excusing: tho' I might also name the conscience that accuseth to despair. This is an evil eye indeed that entertains it self with the terrors of utter darkness in their own shapes, that sees nothing but fiends, those spirits of the dark; nor will see any other. An eye that will not endure, but hates the least light of instruction or comfort. A darkness this, out of which the grave hath been counted an escape, the darks of death a refuge, yea to avoid the horror they have run into the shades of Hell. And oh! how great, how insupportable is this darkness?

But God knows in this age we see little cause to fear, nor reason to endeavor to prevent this. Some little beginnings of it would be mercies to most men, the danger now a daies is in the insensibleness of conscience, the heart that never do's accuse of its commissions in earnest, nay rather do's find out excuses; it do's not check or sting them to the quick, but rather tickles them. Good God! the heathens had a much more tender constitution of soul. The Poet says of guilty souls

----- *ad omnia fulgura pallent,*
Cum tonat exanimes primo quoque murmure celi.

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They that knew not there was an Hell to recompence iniquity, nor knew that God threaten'd it with plagues; yet when they heard it thunder, their guilt did strike them like the thunder-bolts, their souls did faint as it were the voice of God pronouncing wrath to their iniquities, as if its lightnings were the flashes of that brimstone in whose eternal burnings sin must dwell. This conscience did in them, when knowing Christians can stand unappal'd. We read of men of *sear'd consciences* 1 Tim. 4. 2. and such indeed cannot be tender. Searing do's make insensible of pricks or little touches, that you may lance and gash, and it will not perceive. And so it seems are some mens consciences: and you will find there some other qualifications of such men, they *depart from the faith*, they *give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of Devils*; and it will be no wonder if they desert the holy Christian faith, who have put themselves under the tutorage of Satan, and have imbib'd the *doctrine of Devils*, who with his institution, have receiv'd his flames, whose consciences are sear'd, that feel no stripes from their commissions, and are such whom sin do's not wound.

We read of a strange *evil eye* Matth. 7. 3. *seest not the beam that is in thine own eye.* A beam upon the eye must needs make all dark: but the insensibleness of such an eye, that do's not feel a beam is strange beyond imagination, yet 'twas but fit to word a conscience that was not sensible of the guilt of wilful gross deliberate sins; 'tis like an eye that under the dead weight of a mighty beam yet rous and feels no pressure. A much worse then seared conscience this. That which is seared tho it will not shrink for a prick or gash, yet 'twill shrink under load; but this feels no degree of weight; but tho it be that weak and tender part the eye, yet is this without feeling under that which the whole body cannot stand under, nothing but pillars can support.

The characters of such a conscience, and its dark consequence (to fit it to my text,) are given by S. Paul Eph. 4. 18, 19. You see here a *blind heart* like an evil eye creates a darkness such as makes them *aliens to the life of God*; for indeed they lead the life of fiends the inhabitants of darkness, and they do quickly grow to an estate *past feeling*, and then they commit evil *with greediness*.

And indeed 'twere very easy for me to shew how this do's grow by deadening the tenderness of conscience at the first, by fortifying against its checks and pricks, by seeking little excuses to allay and palliate the sores, either Christ do's not mean so strictly; or getting other principles to set against the strictness, as custome of the age, or honor, or the like; God knows things that will not be principles, nor be allow'd in any least degree, when he comes to examin, but in the mean time they do stop the mouth of conscience, and the doing so frequently, together with the conversations of sin, do clear take off the horror, and the averfation, and by degrees the sense: the mind first leaves to be affraid and startle at it, and then leaves to check for it. All this I could deduce at large, but that I hasten to the other remaining consideration of conscience, as it respecteth actions to be don, as it signifies the judgment of the mind informing us what we may or must do, or what we must forbear.

And

And so, I told you, as it answers to the single eye, so it denotes the pure Conscience, the enlightened eye of the mind, that is, a truly well inform'd conscience, a conscience that judges according to its rule. And to this I must (what I promised) tell you first, What is the entire Rule of conscience, that so we may know when conscience do's inform us truly this we must do, that not. For conscience being not it self supreme director, it hath a God above it, that conscience may be right, it must be according to its rule, therefore we must enquire of that; and

First 'tis certain that the Law of God in force (as all the law of Christ is to us Christians, particularly that of these Chapters that contain Christs sermon on the Mount, Repentance, self-denial, Charity, forgiving injuries, humility &c.) is a rule of conscience. And here I will suppose that I do not speak to *Antinomians*, and that I need not to prove that we are oblig'd to do what God by his commands has enjoin'd, and that whether the mandate terminat in duty to himself, or to our fellow men, especially his Vicegerent upon earth the lawful Magistrate. There are some men I know who would acquit themselves to their Governors, if they are content to suffer in case of disobedience: but unless there were guilt in the neglect of active obedience, it would be very unjust to enforce passive, especially when 'tis plain that all the Apostles arguings Rom. 13. do prove an obligation to active duty. 1. Because the Magistrate hath Commission from God; and therefore he that will not yeild active obedience to their lawful constitutions, will not obey the Lords commission v. 2. and then 4. *he is the minister of God*, his officer; and he that do's refuse obedience to those Constitutions of an officer, which his superior hath impower'd him to make, he do's refuse it to that Superior. And out of these he then infers *Wherefore ye must needs be subject*.

Yea indeed if the just laws of such Governors do not oblige the conscience, neither can many of Gods laws. To instance; God hath commanded me I shall not steal, and I think my self bound in conscience not to do it; but what is it to steal? To take that which of right is another mans against his will. And what do's give a right but human Law? 'Tis according to that, any thing is thine or mine. Christ do's not interpose in settling rights; for when the man would have had him *speak* to his Brother to divide the inheritance with him; answers *Man who made me a Judge or a divider* amongst you, let the laws do it. That inheritance which here a Man do's claim as eldest, in other places of this very Nation the youngest should have only right too; where the tenure of Burrough English takes place. And again in other places each brother should have equal right to by Gavelkind. And in some other Nations, as in *Denmark* for example, no child of any second Wife hath any right; according to the example of *Abraham*: yet all these several waies of right are one as just as another, and in one place the one hath as true a right as the other hath in the other. Establish't laws therefore do give the only right, and by those human Laws thou hast a right in conscience to that which they make thine; for otherwise how can it be a sin against my conscience to take that from thee, which

neither thou nor any man else hath a right in conscience to? Such human laws therefore do oblige the Conscience, or else Gods eighth and tenth Commandements cannot.

3. There is yet another branch of the Rule of conscience, and that is the law of scandal. In things that both by Gods and by mans law are free to me to do or not, if yet by doing any of them, or by not doing, I see others will be ensnared in sin, I am bound in conscience to avoid either such actions or omissions. 1 Cor. 8. from v. 8. Rom. 14.

And here I will not wonder how barefac't temptations to vice; and pressing sin upon a man with all the arts of friendship, or of treachery or force, should grow to be civilities and kindneses; when an innocent lawful action is so ill character'd because it may prove a stumbling block: but I will only sum up what hath been said in one word: the Will of God is the Rule of conscience, I am bound in conscience to do what God will have; and so the law of Christ, and the just laws of our just Governors (which that we should submit too, *is the will of God* saith S. Peter) and the law of scandal are the full and entire rule of conscience. Whatsoever they prescribe or forbid, that my conscience, if it be rightly inform'd, will tell me I must do or forbear; and if I act according to the dictates of a conscience so inform'd, my actions will be good and honest, and such a single eye makes my whole body full of light, which was the second thing.

Now this is prov'd in one word; that must needs be a good life, which is regulated by a good conscience, because all good life is call'd by the name of a *good conscience* 1 Tim. 1. 19. This was S. Pauls whole charge to Timothy *holding faith and a good conscience*, there's the belief and duty that's the whole. So 1 Pet. 3. 16. a good conscience is explain'd by *a good Conversation in Christ*, and plainer yet Heb. 13. 18. *We trust we have a good conscience willing in all things to live honestly*. Sincere endeavors to obey the conscience in every thing, not boggling with it accepting the persons of duties, and being very conscientious in some things, but taking liberty in other, bribing my conscience to wink like an evil eye, and leave me in the dark as to some actions, this is not to be conscientious; he is so only that is *willing to live honestly in all things*, and to do so is matter for the Apostles confidence *παραδίδωμι*. This also was the sum of all S. Paul himself endeavored after Acts 24. 16. *And herein do I exercise my self to have alwaies a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man*. He had no stricter aims, here was the height of his Religion, these were his exercises. And the antient Father Clemens Alex. Strom. 6. says *αὐτὸν δὲ διουνομένην τὸ ἕκαστον τὸ πρὸς τὸ θεόν, καὶ τὸ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους διζουὺν διακρίνει*. And what would any man have more? Yea 'tis apparent from the very terms; for if thy conscience truly inform thee of all thy duty, and thou doest accordingly, then thou doest all thy duty, or which is all that we can do. So far as thy hearty endeavor is to this, so far is thy life good and acceptable.

And here I have an hint for application by conviction of those, who guide their conscience, and consequently their lives by humors

mors and fancies, and not by the certain rules of conscience, the laws I have assign'd. Some men will call that conscience which is their inclination, tho they do not examin whence the inclination springs, from God, or from suggestion of an interest, or an affliction, and think they are bound to do, or may do that they have a mind to do. Some mens rash heats that have something like zeal, and it may be that have good intentions in them, are strait the dictates of their Conscience, and they must actuate those animosities and heats, for they are bound in conscience. Some men are advis'd by their fears, and that will look like conscience in a little time. Some mens imaginations prompted by loose and libertine interpretations of Scripture or false infusions, are strait their conscience, and then their conscience tells them they must act accordingly. But where's the Law for these? Conscience was, I told you, Gods Vicegerent, possesseth his throne in man, and was his Deputy, prescribed to all mans actions and took cognizance of them; and accordingly did sentence: and will a man have humor give the Law to Gods Vicegerent, or vain imaginations rule *וְדַעַן בְּיָהוּי* that God *within us*, as the ancients call'd it, let fancy on the Throne?

Or I might secondly complain of them that would divide the rule of conscience, and pick and chuse and take but part of it; the immediate law of God they would think themselves bound to, but for the law of scandal they regard it little. Who did make them the keepers of their brothers soul? If others by misunderstanding of their actions be drawn to sin, at their own peril be it; and at so little rates they value the salvation of that soul, which Christ thought worth his blood, that for their *meat or drink*, as *S. Paul* words it, *they will let their Brother perish, for whom Christ died*, do actions for their interest or security under a close and secret sense of their own, which being not understood by other weaker souls that look on their example with some Reverence, they are led to sin and to perdition.

But much less do they think a law of man a Rule for conscience. According to the Spartan method, to be found out was transgressing the law, the crafty performance was merit and virtue: and whereas only Almighty God has cognizance of the heart, his laws alone can reach designs and the obortive issues of the thought, or those reserv'd enormities that are committed in the dark, and without the privity of a witness.

Here were a subject for a sad complaint, but that I have occasion for a worse, and that is of the conscience, that answers to the evil eye, the other subject of the parable, that is, an evil conscience, a conscience that do's not give true judgment of duty, ill inform'd. And first that which is totally, or for the most so, and of that but a word for 'tis not pleasant sure to rake in such a sinke.

We read in Scripture, of men given up to a *reprobate mind* or sense, *Rom. 1. 28. and to every good Work reprobate Tim. 1. 16.* men who against all the checks of conscience, and in despite of all its oppositions have chosen and pursued forbidden interests and pleasures so long, till custome of them hath made them a part not only of

their family but themselves: and they do nothing now but prosecute them by contrivances and actions, and have don this till conscience is stupified; and as pleasures are especially saith Aristotle, *corruptive of principles*, from the absolute necessity they have conceived of them they think them little sins, and from a long practise none at all, these men are so far in a reprobate ense, their hearts give a false judgment, as false indeed as Satan would have them give, and falser much then he can give himself of things of Religion, who believes and trembles. For they stick not to think those terrors Clergy men do talk of are but mormo's, vizards of fear, only Religious spectres, shades of terror; those strictnesses of vertue and of the means of practising it, but the dreams of bigots, foolish self injuries, and those things we with so much eager zeal call sins, the only and not dangerous enjoyments.

'Tis the Apostles asseveration, and it is justified by every daies unhappy experience, that *evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceiv'd* 2 Tim. 3. 13. Habits of ill improve gradually as those of vertue; only with this difference, that the growth is more suddain and prosperous: like that of weeds and noxious plants in respect of those which are medicinal. There is no opinion, nor no practice so bad which men by degrees cannot make plausible; as custome renders vice necessary, so by familiarity it becomes acceptable; the first horrors are soon worn off; and as it fares in War; the enemy is made a servant, and after grows up to be a favorite, and is at length a master. The progress from bad to worse, is like that of heavy bodies downwards, the native weight, gains fresh accessions from the decent already made, and the motion being continued grows still more rapid and irresistible. That fool who said in his heart there is no God, e're long improves into a wit, and loudly saies there neither is or can be one. Conscience gall'd with perpetual ill usage contracts a callows hardness, and becomes utterly insensible; and by these unhappy steps, ungodly men are dead, while they live 1 Tim. 5. 6. are *dead in trespasses and sins*. Eph. 2. 1.

O thou the day-spring from on high that cam'st to visit us, who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, in ignorance and sin, and in the suburbs of eternal darkness, shed thy light in our hearts we beseech thee and by the Illuminations of thy Holy Spirit give us enlightned minds, and sanctified wills and affections. Thou hast plac'd conscience in thy stead within us, to do thy offices and to be thy Vicegerent, to lay thy laws to us for our direction, and to watch over all our actions, to teach us, to convince us, to correct, or comfort us. Furnish we beseech thee then this thy commissioner within us with all qualifications necessary for thy offices, endue it with the knowledg of all thy will, that we may have a right judgment in all things, and then endue us with obsequious hearts, that may be alwaies ready to obey the dictats of our consciences, willing to live piously and honestly in all things, exercising our selves alwaies in this to have a conscience void of offence both towards God and towards man; and when the good Lord delivers
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us from this sad state and the occasions of it, and if at any time we do rebel against thy officer our conscience, Lord arm it with thy terrors that it may whip and lash us back again into our duty, and sting, and goad, and never let us rest till we return to our obedience and persevere therein unto the end, then shall we have the blessed comforts of a good conscience here, and the glad some light of a clear heart in this world; and in the world to come light and Glory with thee in thy Kingdom &c.

SER-

SERMON

XX.

THE LIGHT OF THE BODY

is the Eye.

Matt. 6. 22, 23.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evill, thy whole body shall be full of darknes. If therefore the light that is in thee be darknes, how great is that darknes?



Have drawn you the parallel betwixt the Eye and the Conscience, to severall of their objects and uses; shew'd you how the clear eye is not a better guide to a mans walks, nor finds more pleasure in the prospects of those beauties that are made to tempt and entertain the sight, then a pure conscience do's find in looking over the landscape of a life led righteously, soberly, and Godly, which it must needs if it follow the guidance of this single eye, this well-inform'd conscience: I have lead you also to the confines of that more dismal prospect, the dark of that sad state, which an evil conscience do's lead into. This I have done in one, and that in the worst consideration, that of a fear'd reprobate conscience; there remain three that I propos'd to consideration; the first that of an erring conscience, second doubtful, third scrupulous.

And now I am to shew how each of these do's lead a man into the dark; the scrupulous raiseth a dust about him, leads into error and discomfort too; the doubtful do's instead of guiding him leave him so puzl'd that he knows not which way to betake himself; and the erring conscience lights him into the pit, and takes him by the hand only to thrust him down: if in any of these waies *the eye be evil, the whole body shall be full of darknes*. Of these in their order.

2. An erring conscience, a conscience that gives false information of duty, that either tells me I may or I must do that which either Gods Law or some Law in force upon me tells me I must not do; or else tells I must not do that which I am bound to do, or at the least may do. Now that this is a light indeed like those
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deceitful ones that lead men over precipices into dark ruins; like such lights that were so plac'd between the rocks as to guide the mariner into a shipwrack, to make it necessary for him to be damnt against the one or the other, is most certain: for so it is here. There is scarce such another infelicity as that this man lies under, whose conscience tells him one thing, when God's Law, or that which is any way his duty do's require the contrary; for if he do according to the Law of God, he acts against his conscience, and so sins; and if he act according to his conscience, he sins against the Law of God. Poor soul! Sin lies on the right and on the left hand, which way soever he do's turn, it seizes on him, and all this I shall prove.

1. That if he act against his conscience he sins, (tho the Law of God make it no sin) Scripture and reason shall make good. Rom. 14. 14. *I know, and am perswaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of it self, but to him that esteemeth anything unclean, to him it is unclean.* God had once forbidden such and such meats under pain of sin to the Jews by Moses Law, and made them unclean, that is, unlawful to their use: Now Christ had taken off this obligation, and made all meats lawful for any man; S. Paul saith that he knew so. I am assur'd that Christ hath so remov'd all obligation to the Law of Moses, that to a Christian no meat is unlawful to be eaten: but yet for all this 'tis unlawful to him, who thinks it still prohibited, and if his erring conscience tell him he ought not eat it, tho by Christ's certain Law he may, he sins if he do eat against his conscience, and that to such an height, that he whose example wrought with him to eat against the perswasion of his mind, destroyeth the man v. 15. *Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died;* 'tis therefore a destroying sin to do a lawful thing against a mans conscience. The reason of all this is cleer, because no Law of God or man, no rule of duty, can be applied unto us, but by the mediation of conscience; for till my conscience laies it to my heart, and tells me such a thing is commanded and my duty, it is to me as if there were no such command, and it were not my duty, for till then I knew nothing of it; this alone therefore do's propose and apply duty to us, and consequently whether that which it proposes be my duty really in it self or no, yet I must needs look upon it as so, having no other direction imaginable what to do or forbear, but what my conscience some way instructed tells me God or my Governors have commanded or forbid me. So that if I am resolv'd in my mind of the sinfulness and obliquity of an action propos'd, tho really the thing be innocent, yet to me in my present circumstance 'twill be utterly unlawful, and tho the action be innocent, the agent will be guilty.

2. That God hath plac'd the conscience in us as the only next and immediate rule of all our actions, according to which they are to be directed, which if they be not, they are faulty, as every thing that swerves from its rule is not right: tho what I have said will sufficiently prove, yet Scripture do's confirm; when it saies Rom. 14. 23. *Whatsoever is not of faith is sin,* that is to say,

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whatsoever is contrary to the perswasion of lawfulness, that is in other words contrary to conscience, is sin; whatsoever he do's as long as he thinks in conscience he should not do it, he sins whether the thing be sin or no, as that was no sin of which he there spake. And reason good; for we are so far honest hearted lovers of God, as we embrace that which our hearts are really possess'd is his service and our duty, and hate the contrary; that is, as we follow our conscience: conscience being nothing but the perswasion that this is duty, which if we go against 'tis sure we like and follow that which in our thoughts is vicious and wicked; be it what it will in it self, to us 'tis so: 'tis sure the inclinations and the actions pursue vice, when they pursue that which they cannot look upon but as vice. Conscience therefore is the rule from which 'tis sin to recede.

'Tis with fair pretence to reason said, that nothing can be a rule which is it self crooked and irregular. That which is strait is indeed said to be *index sui & obliqui*, and having justified its own rectitude, becomes qualified to be a test of right and wrong in others. For certainly if the man knew what God's Law do's require of him, in that case the conscience do's not erre; if he do not know what God's word do's require, how can he follow it against that which his conscience tells him God requires? And it is certain if the man should suspend his action, and have not reason to act according to his erring conscience, he never can have reason to act according to a conscience well-inform'd, not when it tells him God is to be lov'd; for it is sure his conscience do's as much propose the error as his duty, as it do's the truth: the man as really believes the one is to be don as the other, and hath no reason to make difference, and therefore if at any time he must follow his conscience, he must alwaies, and it will be sin to act against it, be it what it will.

But then you'll hope it will excuse to act according to it. Oh no alas! for that's the second thing in this case of erring conscience: if a man act according to his conscience he sins too, if he act against the Law of God. Scripture will furnish me with several examples and proofs of this, and 'tis a doctrine worth the taking notice of, it having prov'd to so many persons a plea for actions otherwise abominable; they follow'd their conscience, 'twas, it may be, mistake in judgment, but 'twas uprightness of heart, sincerity of conscience. Now to take off this color, which I shall do with all imaginable plainness. Our Savior John 16. 2. foretells to his Disciples, *they shall put you out of their Synagogues, yea the time will come that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service*, *καὶ οἱ ἀποκτείνοντες ὑμᾶς νομίσουσιν ὅτι ὑμᾶς θησκούντες τῷ θεῷ*, that he do's offer God an oblation or worship; shall think it not only lawful but acceptable to God, and of the nature of a Sacrifice which propitiates for other offences, to put you to death. See here a conscience bravely gloss'd, when the error look'd like Religion and Attonement, (a color not at all strange to our daies in such another case,) and yet these Jews that did so (for of them he speaks) were given up to the direst punishments that ever any nation did
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groan under. Of the same *Jews* S. Paul saies Rom. 10. 2. *I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*; that is, I must testify of them, that they are very many of them great zealots for their Law, as that which is commanded them by God; and so in their way and heart zealous to have God obeyed, only for want of knowledge they are mistaken in their zeal. Here is strong conscience granted in these *Jews*, and that built up upon a Law of God, then indeed outdated, which yet thro a zealous earnestness they were ignorant of: but yet the following this zeal and conscience was plagued with total induration of of that people c. 11. 8, 9, 10.

Nor was this S. Pauls heat against that persecuting nation, but that Apostle do's more plainly yet and home to our matter say of himself, Acts 23. 1. *I have liv'd in all good conscience before God until this day*: I have all my life long, even when I was a defender of the *Mosaical* Law against Christ's reformation, acted sincerely and uprightly according to my conscience: and again 2 Tim. 1. 3. *I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience*, i. e. whom I have obeyed sincerely all my time, even when thro ignorance I persecuted the Christian faith, doing according to the dictate of my conscience, and as I was perswaded I ought to do. And now if conscience will excuse, there was enough of that, a *good conscience* and a *pure conscience*; and will his fiery persecutions now by vertue of his conscience be Christned holy zeal, shall the pure conscience make his bloody hands to be undefil'd? Oh no: 'twas *Blasphemy*, and *injury*, and persecution, for all 'twas conscience, 1 Tim. 1. 13. *I was before a blasphemer*, &c. and notwithstanding I did it all in the uprightness and sincerity of my heart, I am *the chief of sinners*, v. 15. And let us not suppose these aggravations were laid on by S. Paul upon himself because of his unbelief, that that was the only thing that gave guilt to his actions, and that we thro faith and assurance shall escape, if we do such gross actions out of an erring conscience. For on the contrary S. Paul do's bring his unbelief not as the Aggravation, but the Apology of his crimes, he pleads that for himself v. 13. and he finds another occasion for Gods remitting him not from his conscience, which might alleviate the faults, but by his being by the horror of his sins a greater instance of Gods wonderful grace in forgiving, v. 16. *Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe in him to life everlasting*. God dealt most mercifully with me, call'd me from heaven, whilst I was persecuting him, to be a prime object of his patience and longanimity, and in order of time the first that was so miraculously call'd, that so the wickedest of the Gentiles may in me have an example of hope of mercy, if they shall come in to Christ.

And will it now be fit, my Brethren, with this of S. Paul, who notwithstanding such true pleas of conscience is forc'd to seek out for such motives of forgiveness, and plead hard ignorance and unbelief, and yet confess himself the cheif of sinners, with this I say to parallel some actions of our daies, that under the pretence of

conscience (which too hath no Law, as that of *S. Paul* had, tho then outdated) will justify forbidden actions even against repentance, men will not ask forgiveness where they can pretend conscience: I could instance in a strange particular of one of my remembrance, and my knowledg of the person and the story sufficiently notorious, who because the Papists believing that to be Christ, which indeed is bread, worship it, therefore thought in his conscience all kneeling at the Sacrament Idolatry, and to that error adding the command *Deut. 13. 6, 7, 8, 9.* cut off his brother's and his mother's head: yea and when condemn'd to death by sentence of Law for the action, would not be beaten from his hold, but on the strength of that mistaken place went as boldly with that blood on his hand and his soul to face the judgment seat, as he could have don, had he bin wash'd in Christ's own blood; and of this resolute fury the Zealots of our neighbor country of *Scotland* have made many recent instances in their reviv'd *Ravilliacs*. See the sad issue of an erring conscience, an action whose horror feinds would startle at, such a perswasion do's make meritorious, and yet God knows, that erring consciences have brought the Parent of a Nation (a thing of much direr guilt) to the same state; and yet that conscience must be admitted an excuse, when God knows jealousies and suspicions have bin all the ground and all the rule for their determinations of conscience, and yet on that stock alone they could misjudge and censure, speak evil of and revile the actions of just Governors, and do that which I dare not say. When against all Laws both of God and man, all ties sacred and civil, obligations of oaths and duties, that it may be impossible to plead ignorance, men yet will act under the banner of such a thin conscience, that never could produce any Law of God for its direction or its quiet, and yet think themselves secure. When a confident perswasion of heart, God knows how taken up, shall quite annul that command of Christ, of taking up the Cross, and change that state which he calls blessed, *suffering for righteousness sake*, (if there were such a thing) change it into so great a curse, as men will rather embowel themselves in their brother's hearts, involve a Nation in blood and misery, in guilt and ruin, than not throw off the Cross from off their shoulders.

And now 'tis to no purpose to observe, that when perjury and sacrileg and breach of almost every Commandment in the Decalogue shall not only become tolerable, but be the only character of a godly side by vertue of a thing call'd conscience; surely *S. Paul* was a weak man, that when he had don some such things out of a good and pure conscience, yet calls himself the *chief of sinners*. In like manner in the Church new religious fancies are bold to take upon them the holy face of conscience, and then to quicken men into schisms, and all uncharitable separations and factions, withdrawing them from the obedience of them that have the spiritual rule over them, not at all *submitting themselves to them, who by Gods appointment watch over their souls*, but rather flying in their faces, at once with open disobedience, loud reproches, bitter censures, and severe condemnations. Others, *by having had mens*
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persons in admiration, and consequently their opinions, suffer'd their models to be stamp'd upon their conscience, and then that must justify Ecclesiastical parricides, destroying their own fathers that begot them to the Church, and at once cutting off the whole line of those progenitors, that can derive their race from Christ, a fairer stem and pedigree than most can shew. But alas! my Brethren, if we shall grant that these opinions really possess their souls, and that in the uprightness of their heart they did pursue them, that neither interest nor faction, nor having bin disobligh'd, or having suffer'd, hath puff'd up a passion into conscience, but that 'tis all sincerity; yet we have seen that cannot bear us out in such commissions, 'tis but an erring conscience still that animates a man into any breach of duty, and if there be no other Law to warrant actions, the conscience is so far from being able to justify them, that while it errs, it but entangles a man in the necessity of sinning, leads him into such Labyrinths of guilt, that whatever he do's, he offends: on one side if he do what his erring conscience dictates to him, he sins against God's Law; on the other side, if he forbear, he sins against God's Vicegerent, his own conscience; there is the guilt of his deed, here is the guilt of his heart, which do's oblige a man to follow that which it is sin to follow, and which makes him he must and ought to do that, which he must not nor ought to do.

And sure, my Brethren, the only application to such a conscience is to advise the laying it aside, to rectify the error. Good counsel that indeed, but the hardest to be taken in the world; for that a man may rectify, he must know himself in an error, and if he know that, then he hath not an erring conscience: this when it is strongly so, doth not so much as doubt of his opinion, and while he do's not doubt, what temptation hath he so much as to set upon the rectifying? I shall but name some means.

The first will be Praier for Divine illumination; S. James has directed this, *if any man lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not*, c. 1. 5. and our Savior has promis'd, that *he will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Luke 11. 13. whose office, we know, is to lead us into all truth, John 16. 13.

The second means will be, not to be wanting to our selves, not to shut our eyes against, or resist the truth, Acts 28. 27. 2 Tim. 3. 8. nor by a wretchless unconcern'dness take up with slight appearances, and receive a vulgar error for a sacred revelation, and having mens persons in admiration, Jude 16. *believe as doctrines the devices or commandments of men*, Matt. 15. 9. not to consider what this celebrated Teacher, or this Sect and Party say, but make our resort to the Law and to the Testament, what Law of God there is for, or against this action. For in this case it is most true, *There is one Law-giver, who can save and destroy*, James 4. 12. and if *sin be the transgression of a law*, 1 John 3. 4. it inevitably follows, that *where no law is, there is no transgression*, Rom. 4. 15. And yet 'tis strange to see, how men amuse and embarrass them-

felves in things that have no bottom or foundation in Scripture, and in the mean time *omit the weighty matters of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith.*

Thirdly, if I have bin engag'd in any practices, of which by the contrary practices of other sober rational men, I see there may be reason, if not to doubt, yet to search into them; then I'll take the same course in order to the settling, or the rectifying of my judgment; and especially if any obligations to the contrary have got possession of me, if obedience and meekness, and peace of the State or Church, or any sacred bond, in a word, if any commands of Superiors, or engagements to them seem strong for the other side, then nothing but clear Law of God or my Superiors shall fixe me.

Fourthly, where things are not absolutely convincing on either side, and there is no clear Law on neither, or else so much like Law on both sides; here, as I must suspend if possible my action, for these must needs make doubts, so if I be necessitated to act on one side or other, then if my conscience do mistake, according to the degree of my diligence in examining, so will be the degrees of my guilt. If I have search't to my utmost, and so offend out of an ignorance I could not overcome, it is the constant doctrine of all, that the mercy of our God by the tenure of the Gospel will not impute the error to a person otherwise of holy life: but if there was a means of knowing, that either heat, or any other thing did hurry me from a sufficient consideration thereof, according to my means so is my sin. *Abimelech* had a competent ground to think that *Sarah* was not *Abrahams* wife, when both herself, and he had told him so, and upon that he saies, he took her to him *in the integrity of his heart*, his conscience reasonably well-inform'd telling him that he might do it; and yet God punisheth his hast: he determin'd too speedily, his desire was too quick, did not proceed by those slow steps, that a good careful conscience do's move with, that will examin with all strictness where he discerns there will be gross sin on the other side. The *Jews* had a strong prejudice against Christ's reformation of the Law, by those so many promises of Scripture that their sacrifices should be eternal, and when for many ages they had bin brought up in a Religion so own'd by God, and were so harden'd in that Religion by all their Teachers, 'twas no wonder they rejected the Apostles preaching out of conscience of their own Religion, *Paul* himself had don so, and yet God gives them up to final induration for it; because they had sufficient means of knowing Christ was sent by God to reform their Religion, for *have they not heard?* Rom. 10. 18. Thy diligence therefore shall alleviate the fault, and where it is us'd in a good measure, probably will not suffer the conscience to be long positive and peremptory in a mistake, but at the most will let it only be a doubting conscience, which how far 'tis an evileie, and how we are to guide our selves out of that darkness it do's lead into, we must now shew.

A doubting conscience may be either in things of very little moment, and also where there is very little light to guide it, and then

then we only call it scrupulous; or else in things of consequence, and of these we now treat: and the Position is, that he that acts according to a doubting conscience sins, and this evil eie leads into utter darkness. The Aphorism is a certain reveled pronunc't truth, *he that doubteth is damn'd if he eat*, Rom. 14. 23. However sacred the tribunal of conscience can be thought to be, it must not stand in competition with the Throne of Almighty God, and oblige us to do that which the Divine Command has interdicted, or to leave that undone, the doing of which he has expressly charg'd upon us. It was thought to be a tyrannous hardship which the *Egyptian* task-masters put upon the *Israelites*, that they should be beaten because they made not brick, when they had no straw to make it with: but it would seem a more tyrannous cruelty, to punish them if they made, and also to punish if they did not make it. But so it is; he who chuses to do that which his conscience suggests he ought to avoid as being ill, and resolves to omit that which he judges or believes he ought to do as being good, has all the inordination of mind that constitutes the most flagrant guilt; he pursues evil, and turns away from good apprehended to be such, and so has that depravation of mind that constitutes a Devil. But on the other side, our opinions cannot alter the real natures of things, nor will my belief that my act is laudable make it to be so, any more than my fancy that Poisons are wholesome food, will free them from their noxious venim, and render them restoratives and cordials. In like manner, my adventuring on an action which I think is bad, upon the cold reserve of a possibility, that it may be otherwise, involves the desperate resolution of doing it howsoever; which differs very little from doing it, tho I know it to be certainly unlawful. But a doubting conscience admits of a counterpoile from a contrary doubt, and there is fear of sin, as on the one, so also on the other part. I am uncertain whether I may not do ill in acting, and yet whether I may not do worse in forbearing: or thus, I am not sure that what I enterprize is lawful, but yet I have no ground to believe it is unlawful. Now from this exigent thus declared I might deduce resolutions in many cases of our life. As

1. When there is no ground to build a certain judgment on of either side, but it is only probable the thing is not sin, and consequently I cannot be sure it is not, yet if upon that probability I act, this is clear different from the state of the doubting conscience: for tho I may have some doubt 'tis possible the thing may not be good, yet having honestly examined it, I have no reason to think it not good, and I am sure of my own heart, that if I thought it were so, I would not do it; here is no chusing of a sin, not with the least degree of inclination. 'Tis this secures the Physitian, who cannot possibly be assur'd there may not something lurk in his Patient's body, (for whose dark and unwholsome closets he hath no prospective,) to which the physick he prescribes may be pernicious; yet because God hath revel'd no certain grounds for guidance in this case, therefore he upon diligent search and grounds of art, which are the best God hath allow'd us pre-
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scribing what he really believes will do him good, satisfies a good conscience. Upon the same account the Pilot satisfies himself, where he adventures his ship and freight upon shelves and shallows: and the Captain, when he leads his men upon the cannon's mouth, and other desperat attempts of war.

Shall I make more familiar instances to you: some have doubted whether celebrating Christ's Nativity be not will-worship, because 'tis not commanded in Scripture; others have doubted of the use of Garments prescribed Ministers from the same ground, and from their being significant. Now as to these, not to shew the unreasonableness of these doubts, tho I could easily do it: for in God's name why is it to set apart a day to thank God for the Redemption of mankind will-worship, and yet to set apart a day for the deliverance of a Nation from a temporal plague not will-worship? Is the fifth of November in the Scripture any more than the twenty fifth of December? Or is it the infinitely greater mercy of Christ's Birthday that makes it more unlawful than the Gunpowder-Treason day, and therefore 'tis not lawful because 'tis more fit? And for the Garments of the Clergy, I would they were all significant, but that that is an argument against them in these daies. It is true Scripture prescribes them not, and by that rule they should wear none, for it prescribes none: but pray tell me, will not any of these doubting men seek a Pulpit to preach in, or now a daies a bason to baptize with, never looking whether they have a warrant in Scripture to command it? Just so, rational and sensible men select a particular habit for a Priest, whereby his words and exhortations may be receiv'd with greater respect and authority, and this without any written precept: for as where Scripture commands, it renders every thing necessary; so where it is silent, it renders nothing unlawful in such circumstantialia.

So a prescribed way of Praier is boggled at, and why that more unlawful than a limited way of praising God? They had effusions of those in the first times, why do not we as well pretend to the one as to the other? Or why should it be less faulty to have set forms of singing Psalms than have set forms of Liturgy, in which too people might communicate, as they do also join in praises? or indeed would that Rhyme and tune become unlawful, should the Magistrate command them too?

But passing over this, and to speak in short of the whole matter. If the man that doubts, bids his conscience stand aside, and because of legal penalties muffles himself, and resolvedly goes on, notwithstanding his speculative irresolution, with desperat boldness judging it better to trust God with his soul, than the Law with his estate or liberty: if he fears to consider or enquire, least he should get conviction, that suits not with his interest, and thinks it easier to doubt than to be certain, because he's certainly determin'd to do what is enjoind, tho it be never so unlawful. This is a profligate state of mind, that wants nothing but occasion to engage upon the greatest villanies, and close with Apostacy it self, when recommended by impunity. But if this doubting makes another scheme of reasoning, and performs what is enjoind, because the Magistrate's

strate's command is certain, but its unlawfulness is only dubious, and the safest course is ever the most innocent, because it is the most prudent; then the obligation to suspend the going on to act in case of doubting, is superseded by another obligation, actually to obey the undoubted injunction of Superiors, and the good Subject will not fail to be a good Christian too.

But alas! why should I busy my self in picking cases which here, I hope, are not useful, when as upon this very Proposition we are now upon, other things do apply themselves to most mens hearts of a more strong concern, and of more daily practice. If an action otherwise lawful will make up an indictment to our condemnation, if don with a doubting conscience; what guilt and damnation is there in those actions that are don against present full perswasion of conscience. Truly, my Brethren, I have no aggravation for sins don against knowledg, that being the worst that can be said of sin; and I shall only add, that they who so defie their conscience, are in the ready way to have no conscience, the sad estate of whom my last did display to you; and in short, 'tis no wonder, if God's Vicegerent do depart, when he is so affronted. There is a great and sad example of this procedure Rom. i. 18, 19, 20. *For the wrath of God is reveled from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Because that which may be known of God, is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head, so that they are without excuse.* There is no plea for such, because they did not use their knowledg to his service, but sin'd against it, and by their deeds of darkness put out that light, which was vouchsafed them by God, yea indeed did commit those deeds of darkness in the face of light.

I have to what I have already said, one word to add for the scrupulous conscience. Scruples are little suspicions in things of small concern or indifferency, and where there is but little ground; for otherwise they swell into that we call doubts, and which denominates a doubting conscience. Now scruples, which are small particles of dust, do indeed cast dust into the eies, which dim the sight, and make the eies to roule, and fret, and grieve; and so do these the mind: they disturb duty wonderfully, by taking up the heart, and making it restless and unquiet, and so quite discompos'd for duty; for the heart is still call'd aside, & wandring about that which troubles it. And indeed these quite take off the edge of the mind; for while scruples arise, I am unsatisfied in every thing I do, and then with what heart can I do them? I am in fear of every performance, and such a fear exceedingly damps love, and qualles all endeavors. I have no cheerfulness in my actions, and consequently never can be eager and forward, but cold and slack; for these do still put demurs, and nothing but discomfort dwells upon my spirit.

A dark and ill state this, and therefore 'tis no wonder if the Spirit of darkness sheds it, especially where he cannot draw in the soul to works of darkness; if he cannot quench the heats of their

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devotion, then he will strive to cool them by these arts, which like little dashings of water thrown into the fire, if they cannot put it out, yet at least they darken the flame, and change that which was pure and clear into thick fume and smother: so do these raise smoak and cloud in the soul. If the Devil cannot betray the heart to downright vice, but his suggestions are shut out, and temptations scorn'd, or at least avoided; then he will trouble them in their duties, he will suggest things that under the vizard of nicer and stricter Religions shall be let in, and when they are in, shall put the soul in little combustions, and disturb all its performances. Therefore these are to be combated with, and the heart to be fortified against them; as soon as ever we find these little spies and incendiaries of Satan stirring in the mind, let us strait seize them, and examin what they do there, what account they can give of themselves. Have they any ground or plea? when a thought checks me with a sudden motion of heart, least what I do may be amiss, I will question instantly, hath God said so any where, is there any Law that forbids it? If I cannot resolve my self, I will call in counsel; (for if I be not ashamed to whisper the unhandfomnesses of nature to a Physician, to betray uncomely infirmities, shall the chearful quiet of my Soul, and the comfortable progress of my Religion be less considerable to me?) and if by these means I cannot find God hath forbid it any way, either directly or by consequence, why then shall I do Satan's work for him, help him to disquiet my own heart, make the semblance of Religion hinder my Religion, and with a pudder about duty keep my self from doing duty, much more of which I might perform with less trouble, than I do think of these things, and with infinitely more comfort? No sure, I will make no sins to my self that God hath not made, but in God's name with an upright heart set about my known duty, in full assurance of faith. But

Secondly it will become us, whosoever is at any time troubled with these, to consider with our selves, when we find scruples arise about things of very small concern, to examin, am I thus wary and thus nice in every peice of known duty, have I as sharp checks there, and is my conscience as stirring in every circumstance of sure Religion; if a true object of charity pass by me, or I hear of such an one, whose real wants seem to call upon me for Christ's sake, and I instead of satisfying his needs, satisfy only the importunity of my own thoughts by some little excuse, I have not about me, or let others give that are more able, or why should I give to every one that asks me? In this case now is my heart restless and scrupulous, least the real wants of the poor soul should make an alms duty, unsatisfied till I either know that, or till I do releive him?

If when Praiers call, and at the same time either a trifle or something, which I had time enough before to prevent, and knew well enough the fit times of doing one and t'other, yet seek to detain me; have I scruples here, and are they strong enough to throw aside the less concerns, and will not let my heart

heart rest till it brings me honestly and zealously to my devotions? If some little slight injury, or it may be inadvertency of another fret my mind, and begin to swell me into a passion, or thicken into a grudge, and I am in present heat of words, and remember him with a slight or a less esteem; do scruples rise as fast as these heats, and my heart become more troubled at it self, than at the little conceiv'd injury, and never well at ease, till I am calm to him? If it be not thus, but we who strain at gnats and swallow camels, we whose eyes boggle at motes in the Sun, can wink, or suffer beams to hood-wink them; we that scruple at things indifferent, things of which we have no rule to judge them sins, and are not nice at all in things of certain duty, have no such scrupulous conscience in known faults, or at least in much more concerning matters, we may do well to consider, whether our nicest carefulness in these do not betray, that in such little things the main of our Religion lies, our hearts lay their greatest stress upon these. There are certain formalities of Religion, things that speak people Professors, distinctive characters of a Party professing Godliness, little things by which they are discriminated, as niceties in habits, or gestures, or modes, or tones of speaking, or forms of doing things in Religion, or some strict forbearances of things that all the world beside themselves never imagin'd hurt in. Now they that do make such to be the stamp and signature of a Professor, it is no wonder if they be nice and scrupulous in them; and truly to be scrupulous, especially in such indifferencies, do's dangerously look towards that: 'tis certain, where the greatest care and watchfulness is laid, there will the most and greatest scruples be apt to stir; so that if these be most in such indifferencies, either the heart hath entertain'd some end besides Religion, the seeming strict or a Professor; or else the heart hath bin betrayed, and by being bred up to strict cares, especially in such things, it hath let it self be besotted by those strict and handsom appearances, and low spirited as it is, hath rais'd no higher, but set up his cheif rest there; they think if they do these things, they are religious. There cannot be any other reason given of these different strictnesses, this scrupulosity in little things, and negligence in greater interests; and therefore 'tis worth the search in every heart, in which examination whosoever shall find his scruples to be universal, and proportion'd to the duty, his heart watchful, especially where the concern is greatest, and there most careful where it most behoves him; let that heart take comfort, that quality is but the nicety, the quickness of a clear, pure eye, that can endure no dust, no foil upon it, and such an eye shall lead a person thro the paths of God's word, which is *a light to the feet, and a light unto the paths* here to the Land of everlasting light and glory, where in God's light he shall see light for evermore.

S E R M O N

XXI.

THE LIGHT OF THE BODY

is the Eye.

Matt. 6. 22, 23.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?



HE Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field, Matth. 13. 44. a field this much richer than it shews for, that provides for several uses of our life, that furnisheth with food and wealth too, and is both granary and treasury; and just such is the word of the Kingdom also, it hath in it more than it promises to fight, there are still hidden treasures besides the food that grows before our eyes: if we search, we shall find still more and more furniture for life, more wealth yet in the bowels of it. These words give us experience of this, from which tho we have had several spiritual entertainments, provisions for divers cases of our life, yet have we not exhausted them; for we shall find that yet in another sense *The light of the body is the eye, &c.*

To the two interpretations, I have given of these words, the first of which that by a single eye should be meant a single intention, an intire, honest meaning, an heart like that of *Jacob*, plain, simple, and upright, such as may therefore stile a man an *Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile*, no doubling, but such an one as laies alwaies to it self good ends, and intends to take in no ill means to compass them, hath bin generally adhered to by almost all Expositors. The second, that by the single eye should be meant the pure, clear, good conscience, which to me indeed seems much more proper than the other; to neither of them have I any objection but this, that they do not at all relate to the matter of the discourse, which our Savior hath in hand, and 'tis not imaginable why Christ should in the midst of a Paragraph concerning mortifying the desire and love of wealth, the beginning of which commands

commands *laying up treasure in heaven*, and the end tells us we cannot serve God and Mammon, should interpose any thing of conscience or intentions: and therefore, tho what we have delivered of them be exactly consonant to the words, and built upon other certain Scripture, and be the sense of most men, yet we will view one other, which tho it be assign'd but by one Expositor, that I know of, yet being exactly pertinent to the matter in hand, and having a surer plea for its being the sense of the place, than any of the rest have, it shall not escape us, tho no more have lighted upon it. Now the way of finding out the meaning was, not to consider what may be compar'd to a single eie or an evil eie, for possibly so many things may be; but by seeing what those words do constantly signify in Scripture, and so what light and darkness also do, and then put them together, and see whether they will so here: and we shall take those grounds.

1. Then what a single eie and evil eie do use to signify in Scripture: and for the evil eie, we find it often Prov. 23. 6, 7. *Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eie, neither desire thou his dainty meats; for as he thinketh in his heart so is he; eat and drink, saith he to thee, but his heart is not with thee*: which means, eat not the meat of him that is a niggard, who tho he do invite thee to it, yet he do's grudge it thee; and grieves thou eatest it; his heart do's not speak in his invitations, but he had rather thou wouldest spare, and he computes thy morsels. So again Prov. 28. 22. *He that hasteth to be rich, hath an evil eie*, that is, is covetous; he envies every other man's prosperity, (so most Translations render it here) is troubled to see another flourish, and thinks their gain his loss. So Matt. 20. 15. *Is thine eie evil, because I am good?* he saies to them, who tho they had contracted for a penny by the day for labor, yet when they saw those that had wrought but a little part receive so much, strait entertain'd desires and hopes of more than they had bargain'd for, and when they saw they should have nothing but their due, they murmur'd; to whom the Master do's reply, *Friend, I do thee no wrong, didst thou not agree with me for a penny*, be thou content with that which comes to thy share? This man that came last to work (it being not his fault that he came no sooner, but his not being sooner call'd, and he having labored honestly and cheerfully ever since he came) shall by me, who accept the will for the deed, be rewarded with the same reward that thou hast; and sure thou hast no reason to complain, that I dispose of my own as I see cause: what reason is there that my bounty to others should be matter of envy and discontent to thee? So that an evil eie signifies unsatisfiedness with ones own condition, and envy at anothers, an eie that grieves to see any thing go besides it self; in one word, an illiberal, covetous, envious mind. You have its perfect character Ecclesiasticus 14. from v. 3. to 10. *Riches are not comely for a niggard, and what should an envious man do with mony? He that gathereth by defrauding his own soul, gathereth for others, that shall spend his goods riotously: he that is evil to himself, to whom will he be good? he shall not take pleasure in his goods. There is none worse than he that envieth himself, and if he doth good, he doth it unwillingly. The envious man hath a wicked*

eye, he turneth away his face, and despiseth men; a covetous man's eye is not satisfied with his portion, and the iniquity of the wicked dries up his soul: a wicked eye envieth his bread, and he is a niggard at his table.

Next for the single eye, that certainly is set as opposite to the evil eye, as meaning liberality and chearful bounty, and we shall see accordingly that singleness do's signify; for so our Bible almost alwaies translates the word: 2 Cor. 8. 2. *Their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality*, the riches of their singleness it is in the Original. So chap. 9. 11. *being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness*, to all singleness; again v. 13. *liberal distribution*, singleness of distribution the Greek do's say; and so in many places which others have observ'd; and Rom. 12. 8. *He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity* or singleness, for 'tis the same word still, and there our Margent tells you, that it means liberality. Single therefore do's in Scripture signify bountiful, and we shall find that coupled with the eye, Prov. 22. 9. *He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed, for he giveth of his bread to the poor*. And so we have the Scripture sense of these two words, the single eye do's signify a liberal mind, and the evil eye a niggardly, uncontented, envious disposition. And here let us stop a little, and say a word on these expressions, why these things to the eye? is that the chief seat of those qualities, is not the heart much rather? 'Tis true indeed that discontent and envy shed themselves into the eye, they dwell there in a cloud, the eye flags and is dull, and do's so certainly betray a niggard, envious heart, that we may see it grudges spirits to its own eyes, and do's restrain that current that is to feed them with a vigorous life: when bounty on the other side flows into the eyes in a chearful stream of spirits, that make them full and bright. But this is not all the reason; 'tis not only the sign of these same inclinations that hangs out in the eye, but the lust it self do's lodge and dwell there. S. John calls covetousness *the lust of the eye*, 1 John 2. 16. and that not only because the eye of the covetous is never satisfied with wealth, but lusts still more and more; but there is reason why it should be the lust of the eye, for *when goods increase they are increas'd that eat them, and what good is there to the owners thereof saving the beholding them with their eyes?* Ecclesiasticus 5. 11. When plenty do's stream in upon us with a torrent, while we do lay it by and do not use it, then it is clear, that nothing but the eye enjoys it: when we do lay it out, if we dispose it to comply with fashions, or to serve pomp and ostentation, or to feed emulation, because I will not be without what any other hath, or else to entertain sports and delights, it is clear that nothing but the eye is treated with the expence, and with the magnificence of these; neither the back nor belly hath the least relih of them, nor hath the soul any other organ to imploy about them, but the organ of seeing. But if thy riches be expended in great provisions for the appetite, unless a man can stretch his belly as he do's his barns and his demesnes, and make all bigger, enlarge his stomach as he do's his table, pull out new sides of appetite, and multiply his hungers as he do's his dishes; the wealthy man himself devours but little more,

more, than when he had not such abundance, only he sees more meat, and sees more eaters of it: so that muchness of wealth, what is beyond sufficient competency, nothing but the eye enjoys, and it is therefore said that that lusts after it; 'tis the eye desires riches, and with them we serve no other part.

And then, my Brethren, this expression of single eye or bountiful eye do's let us see, that liberality is no great pressure to a man, it do's require no inconveniences from him, it do's retrench from nothing but his eye; if we can but get this to be moderate in its objects, get but a single eye, an eye that is not covetous of every thing it likes and that delights it, an eye that will be satisfied with competencies, and then a man will have no other uses for much wealth, but only those of doing good with it; for if thine eye be not alwaies gaping after superfluities and daily novelties of entertainments, pursuing every thing it fancies, or any other man possesses, and still ambitioning the heights of whatsoever it beholds that pleases it; if he can keep it from thirsting after every thing that feeds its own pride, or anothers envy: keep, I say, but the eye in bounds of moderation, and there is nothing else in man, that do's require much for its satisfaction. 'Tis nothing else but the unlimited, unwearied eye, that looks thro all the world for entertainments, and must have services from every part of the whole universe; the *Indians* must dive into the depths of the Abyss, and digg the rocks to get a Jewel that shall dash a little light into thine eye; the Mariner must pass throughout all the variety of climes, must cross the frozen and the torrid Zones to pick up those diversities of things that are to please thy sight, with a new garment for thy self or for thy chamber, or rather are to make a dress, not for thy back indeed or for thy room, but for thy eye, which is not well, except it see fine things; that must have furniture out of the bowels of the worms, and out of the bowels of the earth, have gold and silver utensils, and silken ornaments, and have I know not what: so also several nations must conspire to make up almost any one in the whole variety of sports, which yet do but pass by, and please the eye, and move away as quick as sight it self. It is the eye indeed that endears every excessive sin to us. The Scripture do's most properly express it, when it saies the *Adulteries of the eye*; for its delights, those of variety I mean, for that too hath no other, serve nothing but the eye. So it is in the sin of pride, and covetousness, and pleasure: it is that part spends almost all the riots and intemperances, that drinks in objects minutely, and thirsts for all diversities, these consume. Do but teach that to be content, and there will be enough for charity. If God had bid us rob our bowels for to feed the hungry, divide necessity betwixt us, and deny nature's cravings to hear those of the poor, it had bin hard; and tho the Lord emptied himself for us, yet sure the croaking of our empty bowels would have sounded much like murmurings at such a precept: but when he bids us only spare a little of the provisions of our eye, which wants nothing at all of them, do but deny thy sight some little portion of its excesses, and lay out some of its unnecessary objects
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on the Poor, and I will ask no more for charity. This sure is no hard duty. Get but a single eie, an eie that is not niggardly and covetous, that catches at and grasps at every thing that likes it; do but moderate its desires and lusts, and all the rest of thee, thy back and belly will be easily contented, will spare enough for liberality: 'tis nothing but an evil eie that hinders. The pinching Miser he can deny all other appetites to gorge his eie, he crucifies his flesh, and almost starves his body to provide for his sight; 'tis this alone he cares for, to have wealth to behold, not use. Could he cure this Wolf, this canine appetite in his eie, that is so greedy to look on wealth, he might afford to give his heaps, for he do's nothing else with them, but see them. And 'tis the very same with them who are as covetous of pleasures for their sight, or things to furnish out the pomps of pride or ostentation of vanity; if their eie would abate in these, bounty would have provisions.

And sure, my Brethren, among the lovely changes that the eie delights in, this might come in for one handsom variety, to see such and so many souls live cheerfully thro the help of thy liberality, to see thy wealth, not only feed the instruments of thy delight, thy Dogs, it may be, or thy Hawks, but feed poor Christians, but feed the members of thy Savior; to see when with a great deal thou canst hardly furnish one room well, much less of it do's furnish such poor laboring families: furniture of a very comfortable prospect it will be at that day, I am sure, when all the other satisfactions of thy eies are dead, or else dissolving in a flood of fire, then to behold those works which thy estate did help thee to perform; for they *shall follow thee to Heaven*, Rev. 14. 13. and to see that Christ upon the Throne, whom in his members thou hast oft reliev'd; an object that will comfort such a single eie with everlasting light. And so I pass to the second terms to be expounded, Light and Darknes.

1. Light in Scripture do's often signify Prosperity, as Darknes do's the contrary. I need not cite much Scripture for it, Psalm 18. 28. *For thou wilt light my candle, the Lord my God will enlighten my darknes.* Job 21. 17. *How often is the candle of the wicked put out, and how oft cometh their destruction upon them? God distributeth sorrows in his anger to them.* Isaiah, c. 5. 30. do's expresse times of affliction thus, *and if one look unto the earth, behold darknes and distres, and the light is darkned in the heavens thereof.* So chap. 8. 22. *Behold trouble, and darknes, and dimnes of anguish.* Now if it mean thus here, then the sence is, a single eie fills the body full of light; Charity makes a man prosperous in all his actions; but *if the eie be evil, the body shall be full of darknes*, he that either to furnish coffers, pride, or pleasures, or excesses do's retrench from bounty, however he advance these for a while, yet before long God will cut off the opportunities of these; he that will not put a good portion of what he hath to good uses, the time will come, when either he or his, however well provided for, shall not have for their own uses: if their eie be so evil as not to let their candle shed a light to any other but themselves, God will put out their candle, and uncharitableness shall bring adversity upon them or upon their families; and

and if the verse mean thus, then it agrees with Solomon's Aphorism Prov. 11. 24. *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to penury.* But to this I have spoke already; now I shall only say, this is a doctrine that we need not only trust on Christ for the truth of, a very Turk believes it, and not the Gospel only, but the Alcoran affirms it: saying, that which they lay out of their wealth in the way of God, in pious charitable uses, is like a grain that brings forth seven stalks. Blessed harvest of Charity, increase more than an hundred fold! and I will add but one place of Scripture to it, which saies over the Text in larger and more glorious words Isaiah, 58. 7, 8, 10, 11. *To deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house, when thou seest the naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy self from thine own flesh; then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward: and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in droughts, and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be like a water garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.* The expressions seem to grow upon the Prophet, first he saies, *Thy light shall break forth as the morning*, by little slow degrees of increasing light, which peeps out first in a dawn, and so grows into day; and so shall thy prosperity, which dawns and brightens by degrees, as thou drawest out reliefs: but he corrects these words, and thinks this is not blessing quick enough for this vertue, whose return shall be more eminent, conspicuous, and notable; *thy light*, saies he, *shall rise in obscurity*, shall have no creeping twilight for to usher it, but thy very night shall break into Sun-shine, and in the midst of hopeleis affliction the face of joy and gladness shall rise upon thee. Yea more as if the rising light were but weak, and too faint for his meaning, *Thy darkness shall be as the noon-day*, strong and hot brightness shall break in upon thy occasions of sadness, which shall both cherish and enlighten thee, thaw every thing that did sit cold about thine heart, and make all pleasant shine about thee. But where, I pray you, are the Luminaries that are to shed this Noon? The Prophet hath them here, *thy Righteousness*, that is in Scripture dialect thy Alms, *shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward*: Light expres'd not only in terms of overflowing blessedness, but terms of guard and strength; Light he shall have here that shall be glory to him, and shall be fortification to him; *the glory of the Lord shall be his reward*, as if the charitable man did also dwell in Light that were inaccessible, who is so guarded as to have righteousness in his van for his avantguard, and the glory of the Lord of hosts and victories for his rere-defence; which means in plain words this, that the Lord will make the righteousness of such a man appear, and will do good and glorious things for him in this life. And then let others please themselves to have their wealth break out in shining pomps of bravery about them, or flow in streams of plenty

and of delicacy, or of pleasure; alas the spring of these will quickly fail. If any scorching weather come, any fiery trial, any persecution, yea any daies of adversity, the wealth will go out that is to furnish them; or if there do not come such daies, yet the too full streams will drain the fountain, and there will be no spring to feed the current; yea or however in a while these streams must grow unpleasant, and they will choak the soul that swims in them: but the charitable man, the man that deals his bread, and draws out his soul to the hungry in relief, while he hath the means, and in compassion and assistance while he hath not, whatever fail, the fountain of the glory of the Lord cannot be exhausted, he will have righteousness and glory still about him; the comfortable streams of which are of another relish than those carnal worldly delights which wealth provides, or else can give; of a more blessed goust, the inextinguishable shine of which is surely far more cherishing and gladfom, than the gauds of vanity or fading pleasures. The brightness of God's glory cannot die, cannot be taken from thee, it is its own defence and shine: for righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward, and then 'tis clearly prov'd, that such a single Eie shall make *the body full of light.*

2. Light do's signify holiness of life, deeds truly Christian; *walk as Lights in the Lord*, nothing more common in Scripture: and Darkness signifies a sinful and un-Christian life, a life that's full of deeds of darkness. And then the words mean thus; as the eie is the candle of the body, lightens and directs it well if it be as it ought, but otherwise very ill, and the man is in the dark, if his eie be ill, and do not serve him: so is the heart of man, as to the guidance and direction of his actions; if his eie be single, if he have an heart taken off from the world, a liberal, bountiful mind, not fet upon the love and desire of the things of this world, his whole body will be full of light, his whole life will be very Christian, all his actions holy and heavenly, and to the making of them so, liberality of mind hath a very observable influence. It will incline a man wonderfully to pious courses, it is a leading vertue, as the eie is a leading part. But if the eie be evil, but if the heart be worldly set upon wealth, either for it self, or for those heights or fine things, or pleasures which wealth do's procure; if it be unsatisfied in these things for it self, or envious at others for them, the whole body will be full of darkness, the whole life will be very un-Christian; such a disposition of mind as that, quite draws a man off from the temper that Christ requires: the unsatisfied, the envious, and the covetous person can never serve God, but only Sin, those dispositions being the root of all evil. Now *if the light that is in thee be darkness*, if thy heart be un-Christian, and if thy leading vertue, that was to take thee off from all worldly inclinations, be extinct and dark in thee, *how great is that darkness?* what an un-Christian life will there be, and whatever light do's shine about thee of the Gospel, whatever light thou dost pretend of knowledg; or of whatsoever else, there is a deep darkness dwells upon thy heart, and is in all thy actions.

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Now this sense we see connects what went before and that which follows after, drives on our Savior's design that he is pressing here, and to this sense Scripture alwaies speaks in the expressions of single and of evil eie, of light and darkness; and therefore this was certainly the sense that was intended by our Savior, and to the prosecuting of it I shall shew,

1. That to have a generous, liberal mind, an heart taken off from the self uses and advantages of wealth, is the great means, the great engine and instrument of making all the actions very Christian, the life holy.

2. This grace in the heart, bounty of mind, is a great evidence of a true Christian heart.

3. A worldly heart, loving and desiring wealth, troubled at its condition, envying others that are in better, and for the ends of any advantages to it self, straitning its liberality, is not only in it self an un-Christian temper, but such as is the root and cause of a life wholly un-Christian and unholy. Of these in their order.

1. To have a liberal mind &c. That the throwing of this earth out of the heart is a most hopeful way of making the man clean and pure, we have most pregnant Scripture, Luke 11. 39, 40, 41. *Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as you have, and behold, all things are clean unto you:* which bears this sense, ye hypocritical Pharisees wash your selves as if a man should wash his vessels, the outside of them only, leaving the insides of them full of filthiness; for thus do ye wash your bodies, leaving your souls full of all uncleanness. This is an extreme folly; for if your outward washings were in obedience to God, you would cleanse the insides, your hearts and souls, as well as your bodies. The best way of purifying your selves, your estates, your meats and drinks, &c. from all pollution cleaving to them, is by works of mercy and liberal alms gifts, and not by washing pots and vessels. Thy broken meats, thy scraps, thy charities shall cleanse thy platters more than washing them shall do, alms shall make all things clean. But how this? To cleanse hath two aspects, either on the guilt of past actions, or on the habits and dispositions to future commissions; and is to cleanse us from the evil that we have don, or to make us clean from those vices that were in us, and which would make us do more evil: the first of these is don by Repentance, not by Alms. Indeed the Wise man saies, *the alms of a man is as a signet with the Lord, and he will keep the good deeds of a man as the apple of an eie, and give repentance to his sons and daughters,* Ecclesiasticus 17. 22. the happiest way of purchase for a family in the world. To give to children an estate perchance is but to give an instrument of vice, bestow the means of sinning on them; at best 'tis but to leave them pomp and superfluity: but to give Repentance to them is to give security of everlasting blessedness, this is as it were to entail Heaven on ones children. But this is not the thing we mean, we are to see how Alms should make us clean from vice. It is observ'd by a Reverend

Expositor, that our Savior speaking *Syriack*, useth a word for alms, which in that language and *Arabick* signifies cleansing; that is, give Alms, which as it comes from a word that signifies to cleanse, to all shall be clean to you: and they give this reason of the notion, they derive Alms from a word that signifies to cleanse, *quod opes ab inquinamento, & animum ab avaritiæ sordibus purgat*, because

1. Alms purgeth our wealth from the pollution and filthiness that adheres to it. As among the *Jews* it was not lawful for any man to use the increase of his own land or cattle, to eat part of his own harvest, nor feed on his own vineyard, or imploy the profits of any one beast of his own herd or flock, till he had given up to God the first-born of that beast, offered the first fruits every year of his fruit-yards, and dedicated a first sheaf of his harvest: this must sanctify all the rest, which till then was unclean, not to be used by him; to this, it seems, our Savior do's look in his direction. There is an unclean tache in every thing that comes from earth, it do's derive a soil and tincture thence, and taste of the place from whence it came, there is a kind of unsanctifiedness in wealth, which must be purg'd away. Our Savior do's imply this, when he saies, *all things shall be clean to thee*, intimating, that without some such course be taken *πάντα* all our possessions are unclean to us; and *S. Paul* saies expressly of meat, it must be sanctified. Now saies he, the way to cleanse thy meats (and so for all thy wealth) is to give up part of thy meat to God by the now Christian way of sacrificing, Alms: this the truest way of blessing a meal, by engaging God a guest to it, who brings his blessings alwaies with him, and he hath still a share in that meal that the poor partake in. This course is of so great importance to be taken in every sort of our wealth, that holy *Job* presses an imprecation on himself, if he have not don so, *Job* 31. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23. *If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eies of the widow to fail, or have eaten my morsel my self alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; for from my youth he was brought up with me as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb: if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep, then let my arm from my shoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone; for destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.* So that Alms makes *πάντα καθαρά*, all our possessions, all our moderate enjoiments clean, it sanctifies them to our use.

But secondly, which is more to our design, their second reason is, *animum ab avaritiæ sordibus purgat*, it do's draw off the heart from worldly mindedness, and by that means from all unclean carnalities: but do not mistake me, Brethren, that a few, tho perhaps noble acts of charity will necessarily take a man off from all vice; he may perchance be willing in some good humor to part with some wealth, that will not part with a lust or an ill custome, and his profuse and inconsiderate bounty may come in amongst his prodigalities, and be his vice, so far it will be from cleansing him from vice. But the thing is this, he that hath thus far conquer'd

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his heart, and unwrap it out of the intanglements of riches, that he is perfectly dispos'd in mind, not once, but by a constant course to dedicate a good portion of what he hath for those compassionate uses, and is very well pleas'd to look upon such a share as not his own, but set aside and consecrated: 'tis certain that if this be hearty, he that can resolve to part with such a part of income for those uses, must also resolve to part with all worldly or carnal advantages of that income, such things as it procur'd him, and he cannot have without it. If I will cut off so much from my estate on that good consideration, then I must cut off such degrees of superfluity, I must abate such and such pomps and vanities, I must retrench excesses, and I must part with heights of pleasures, for these are virtually resolv'd in the other; I cannot have these if I give away the foment, the thing that is to feed and preserve them, these therefore I dispos'd of with that part of my revenue, nor shall I think them fit to vie with those necessities, that beg for Christ his sake, nay with those wants of Christ himself that begs in those poor mens requests and needs, nor shall I for such things draw back or grudge my charities. I can much easier want some portions of those contents, than see so many souls want necessities; compassion strikes me deeper than those satisfactions, and finds me much more pliant, and more sensible. Lo here a man already brought within the mediocrities of vertue, there too where vertue finds the greatest oppositions of temptation; those of intemperance, and pride, and pleasure, in all these he is moderate and calm, merely by vertue of his bountiful-mindedness; and if he be not so, 'tis certain that the person is not free-hearted; unless it be unto his sins or the companions of them. For if he love his pride, and heights, and honors, and all those pomps that are to serve them and his emulations; or love the superfluities of riots; or love immoderate delights, 'tis certain he loves wealth implicitly, altho he take no notice of it, and he is covetous in his heart, tho he do's not discover it; because he cannot but desire passionately that which is to furnish his eager desires, and love immoderately that without which he knows, if he consider what he do's, he cannot have that which he loves immoderately; and if he do resolve to serve those still, and yet do give away, 'tis out of inconsiderateness, not from bounty; he is not liberal but rash and careless, will not weigh how the wealth serves the other ends, but still resolving upon these, not minding what he do's, disposeth of the other. No, he that is truly compassionate and liberal, resolves to deprive himself of somewhat to relieve others wants, that is to say, if he consider what he do's, (and if he do not, 'tis not liberality of heart) to deny himself some of the advantages of his estate, (for to consideration those and his estate are all the same) pomps, profits, and pleasures to sustain those that need: and he that do's so, he hath plainly brought himself into the bounds of all vertues, and for the rest that concern men, 'tis sure he that is so fully dispos'd in heart, as to deny himself his own advantages merely to do good to others, cannot be inclin'd to do ill to others for his own

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advantage,

advantage, these inclinations cannot dwell together; so that in one word, this bounty of heart engages into all Morality, he will be humble, sober, contented in himself, and live righteously and justly with other men. 'Tis such a leading quality, that merely by vertue of that disposition of mind, when it is seated there in earnest, the other parts of that which we call honesty, come in. And then for all Religion and Piety, if he that out of obedience to God and compassion to the afflicted have brought his heart to such a pass, that he can draw out his soul to the needy, 'tis certain that in doing so he *laies up treasures in heaven*, v. 20. and by the verse that follows he that laies his treasure there, he sets his heart there also; and he whose heart is set on heaven, I shall not fear to pronounce of him, his actions will drive him thitherwards with all religious violence. Do but think with your selves how you pursue the things your hearts are set upon in earnest, what out-goings of soul you have to this rencounter of the object of its strong affections, no rest but in the labors that work towards it, no calm but in those violences. And much of this there must be in Religion, where the heart is set upon the hopes of it, on heaven. He must be eager in it, as the covetous is on his gains, the proud man on his pomps, the pleasurer on his sports, the Epicure on his excesses. It is not possible a man should have no heart to that on which his heart is set. He therefore that hath set his heart on heaven, must be religious and holy; and so it is concluded that the liberal-minded must needs be so. The progress of which proof is this, he whose heart is in heaven, his conversation will be there, his life will be Christian and holy: he whose treasure is in heaven, his heart is in heaven: he that hath taken off his heart from the world, and out of liberality of heart gives alms, he laies his treasure up in heaven, and then it is concluded that he is religious.

And this now may apply it self without my help to press it to you. Ah my Brethren chuse and strive towards a vertue that will help you to all the rest, that will calm and moderate your affections to this world and the dying follies of it; and that will draw your hearts to heaven, and set them on the world to come. Who would not labor for one disposition of mind that comes with such a train of pieties, that hath all Christianity in its attendance, and brings all into the soul with it? Who would not give alms, if by doing so he give himself a shole of vertue? to whom is this man bountiful, but to himself indeed? Here is a ground for men to beg after the fashion of *Lombardy*, Be good to your-self, Sir, and bestow an alms upon me: for he indeed is good unto himself, who what he gives laies up in heaven as a treasure for eternity, and at the same time entertains the disposition to all piety in his heart, receives all vertue into him. I shall not need to call in accessory proofs, fetch in auxiliary motives, tell you that works of charity are called *good works* in Scripture, and the liberal man *good*. So Rom. 5. 7. the *good man* signifies, and Tit. 2. 5. where the women are commanded to be *good*, it is merciful; so works of mercy are call'd *good works*, Acts. 9. 36. *doing good*, Matt.

Matt. 12. 12. Heb. 13. 16. *good fruits* James 3. 17. So to *work good* signifies Gal. 6. 9. and *every good work* 2 Cor. 9. 8. is works of mercy, as if he did engross all goodness, and that same virtue did fulfil the title. Nay I tell you more, that the *merciful man* and the *perfect man* are but two words for the same person, Matt. 5. 48. Luke 6. 36. all Christianity is so sure appendant to this disposition of the heart, (when it is in the soul I tell you, not when it is now and then in the actions) that this alone is perfectness, 'tis *entire lacking nothing*. And then here is a clear account, why at the last great trial nothing should come upon account but charity, that is the only thing the Judg takes cognizance of at the day of final doom; *When I was hungry, ye gave me meat*: the words of everlasting Judgment pass only in relation to this, nothing but charity do's come into that sentence, for all the rest is implied in this: and where the heart is liberal, the whole life will be Christian; this is an evidence will pass at God's Assize, stand before the Searcher of the heart and reins. And therefore it may well be a sign to us, and make proof, that this grace in the heart, bounty of mind is a great evidence of a truly Christian heart: the second Proposition.

Blessed Savior, thou that wert all bounty to us, that didst emty thy self to enrich us, and didst chuse rather to die thy self than not relieve us when we were sick to everlasting death; give us grace to be like-minded, shed into our hearts this disposition of soul, that will make us so remember thee, a disposition that will make our affections even and moderate to things of this earth, which by teaching us to part with wealth contentedly, will work us out of the world, and teach us not to be enamoured on the advantages of wealth, not to be passionate for pomps or pleasures, or for any superfluities which wealth procures, which will set our hearts in heaven, and lay up treasures for us there; which if it rob us of the pomps and the magnificences of this world, will give us for them pomps of piety, the whole train of virtues, a long attendance of graces; if it deprives us of some heights or some excess of pleasures, it will recompence with the satisfactions of relieving Christ in his members here, and reigning with him hereafter in Kingdom.

S E R M O N

XXII.

THE LIGHT OF THE BODY

is the Eye.

Matt. 6. 22, 23.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?



PHILOSOPHY do's say that all vertues are so annexed and tied together, that it is not possible for any man to have any one truly and compleat, but he must needs have all; they are like pearls upon the necklace, from which if any violence pull one, the string is broke, and all are shatter'd and disorder'd. And S. James saith, c. 2. 10. *Whosoever shall offend in one point, is guilty of all;* and sure the vertue of the Text makes good both these Positions: if liberality of heart be that one point, he that excludes it from his Soul, shuts out the rest at once. All the graces are as train to that leading vertue, are its such close attendants, that they must needs have the same fate, and either dwell together in the heart, or all together be thrust thence: for, *if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.* An envious discontent, uncharitable mind, makes the whole life un-Christian, and he that do's offend in that one point, must needs be guilty of all; and if Charity, that *bond of perfectness* in S. Paul, that tie of graces that do's unite them to it self, and with each other, if that be there, all graces must be there, and liberality of heart makes the life Christian; for *if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.* But

I am now to shew you that bounty in the heart is a great Sign of a true Christian heart, that that person who not out of easiness or modesty of constitution not knowing how to deny when he is askt, nor out of inconsideration or vanity bestows an alms, or else when importunities do's beg it; but he who out of real compassion

compassion to the wants of others, and hearty sense of their calamities, and out of sincere obedience to God resolves with himself to deny himself such and such advantages of his condition to such a good proportion of what God hath bestow'd upon him, purposes in his heart to set aside such a portion from his own uses, knowing and considering that by so doing he do's part with such and such satisfactions which did accrue to him by that wealth, yet will do it for the relief of others necessities, that their souls may be comforted, and they may praise God in his behalf. This person hath in himself a great evidence of an heart truly and sincerely wrought upon by the Gospel, and wrought over into the realities of Christianity.

I shall prove this to you, and tho I know there be many vertues which seem to have no connexion with liberality, and many inclinations in the heart which bounty hath no direct influence upon, several evil tendencies of soul which it hath no formal opposition to, that it should thrust them out of the heart; yet that such a complexion of mind doe's either directly or by consequence so oppose them, as not to endure them in the heart, I shall very briefly shew you in gross, and by retail.

And first that in gross that is a sign of a true Christian heart, see Col. 3. 12. *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness;* it seems that bowels of compassion and bounty is a sign of being such full Christians, that the Apostle takes in all words to compleat the Character, and do's it in words of a beloved sense: and let men take them in what sense they please, they do my work, whether as persons chosen out before all time; it seems then to be liberal is a sign of that, and they will have very little reason to conclude themselves elected an eternity before they were, who now they are, and are call'd and taught by God, do not find this disposition in their hearts: or to take them in their naked meaning, be liberal, as being God's choice and pretious ones, (so it signifies, *elect, pretious*, 1 Pet. 2. 6, and in other Scripture *elect* is the choicest, best,) such as are priz'd and valued by God: *as the elect of God, holy*, such as have his sanctifying Spirit poured out upon them; and such are beloved by him, as choice and pretious things are alwaies dear to us. Now then to be compassionate and bountiful is to be as thus, and liberality of heart is one mark of Election and Holiness, and they that have it, are as God's choice, sanctified, dear ones. *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of compassion and bounty.*

2. As it is a sign of our being the Elect of God, and the Inhabitation of the Holy Spirit, so it is also a sign of our being like minded with Christ. S. Paul do's urge his example as a motive to the *Corinthians* liberality, Ep. 2. c. 8. v. 9. *For ye know the grace (or charity) of our Lord Jesus Christ, that being rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye thro his poverty might be rich:* and therefore for us to do so is to follow his example, and to have our hearts set to it is to be *like minded*, and truly that is to be Christian enough. If that a person of the God-head *emptied him-*

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self, ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν Phil. 2. 7. exhausted himself of Divinity to relieve us; if the God of all the pleasures of the earth and the joies of heaven became the Man of sorrows to rescue us, if that the Lord of everlasting blessedness made himself Prince of sufferings and calamities to ransom us, if this be a temptation to the inclinations of our heart to set us upon going to do likewise in some low weak measure after the rates of our abilities; then to do so considerably, to deprive my self of some advantages, to exhaust somewhat for the sakes of those that want, is to have the *like mind in us that was in Christ Jesus our Lord*: but because this may possibly evince us to be like-minded only in one thing, therefore

3. In particular, he that is thus minded hath a great evidence of his having overcome the World, a wide and a vast conquest; for, my Brethren, 'tis not only he that is a slave to money, whose heart and actions do importunately pursue the waies of getting or of hoarding that, whom the world overcomes; but he is a slave to the world, whose mind is impotently set upon any of the advantages of this world, the man whose heart do's in too great a proportion either of time or whatsoever else pursue any thing which this World is to furnish with, that man's heart is entangled in the pursuit, and it is fetter'd to the World, which is his motive and pretence for that too eager inclination. And therefore in our Baptism when we renounce the World, we do not only bid defiance to the love of money, but we renounce the Poms and vanities of this wicked World; whatsoever either too great pleasure or height, excess or ostentation, or pride that this World ministers unto. Now then, when a man do's not only now and then give little to them that ask and beg of him, (for so it go's away in such small instances, as will not evidence either much consideration of it, or any great work wrought upon him as to not loving of the World,) but in devout retirements resolves to deny himself in such a proportion, and cut off such a part, 'tis certain he do's cut off such degrees either of pomp or vanity, or plenties, or whatsoever other thing that part of his estate did serve. Now he that can do this resolutely in his soul, not out of any heat, but from deliberate purpose of heart, 'tis certain he hath to so great a degree disentangled himself from the snares of the pleasures or other advantages of this World, he hath unloosed their fascinations, and weakned all their sorceries; 'tis clear he hath so far withdrawn his heart from the degrees of whatsoever he did love that this World serv'd him in, that he resolves none of them shall engage him to their superfluities: for to prevent that he cuts off their foment, the streams of those contents, they shall not overflow his soul; for he will turn the spring, and make the current run another way. 'Tis evident he hath so torn all beloved earthly satisfactions from the embraces of his heart, as that he will not feed them, not with his own estate, if he cannot also to a vertuous degree feed the poor: he hath so far turn'd out the love of pleasures, or of poms, or whatsoever, as that he willingly do's part with those degrees of them,

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cannot be retain'd together with his liberality. And such a heart sure is without the vicious degree of worldly contents: for vicious inclinations to them use to pursue them as far as they are able, and set no bounds to themselves but those of possibility, will not be limited in their prosecutions by considerations of a vertue as this man's are, and therefore he is too strong for these temptations, and so hath overcome the world.

And now if we consider the advantages of this conquest either in gross, it is a victory over such Enemies as were in Christ's opinion almost invincible, such as did so block up all passages and avenues to blessedness, that he affirms and repetes *it is impossible for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. Let men think what they will of those occasions of sin, which their dislikes of a low condition or of poverty makes them believe it do's abound with; but I tell you there are such ineluctable temptations to vice in an estate of plenty, as that without a greater measure of God's grace than is sufficient for any other state of life, a man will never overcome them. It is so insuperable a temptation to have that which will furnish him with all his heart or lust can wish for, to have every thing that is in his desires put into his power, and so impossible to part with that which serves all his inclinations when God calls for it, as he do's when we cannot at once keep the estate and obey Christ, (which was the occasion of our Savior's words:) and wealth it do's so fawce and invite every vice, it do's so dress objects for lust, and feed with those full plenties, that hear men into it and strengthen for it, do's so pour in provocatives by idleness and excesses, it do's so fill with insolence, or pride, or ostentation and vain glory; it do's so swell and so puff up with heights and scorns, makes men condemn others and oppress them, think any thing almost is lawful in their usage of them; yea become careless of Religion, and by degrees condemn it too, wax insolent with God, scoffers at piety, rude in profaness, any thing forsooth they may do; and a whole shole of other such like qualities are the almost certain appendages of men in estate, at least in some degree. In a word, it takes off the heart quite from the Love of God and those things that relate to him, it fixes them so to these worldly satisfactions: yea when it comes to such a pinch, that a man must either wound his conscience, do some great deliberate sin, or part with this so forsooth happy utensil, his estate; break with all the duty in the world rather than part with that which furnisheth him with such convenience of sins, that 'tis no wonder if it be impossible for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

And then for a man to have overcome the General of this great Army of ruinous vices, the only leader that can draw them up against him, to have cut off the source that feeds this inundation of mischeifs, these overflowings of ungodliness from the heart, is a good strong evidence to a man's heart, that he is well resolv'd against the vices, when that he do's resolutely deprive himself of the instrument of them, the thing that do's advance them, and hath perfectly divorc'd from them: he needs

not doubt but that if it please God to bring him to straits, that he shall rather be content to part with a good portion of his estate, than part with a good conscience, who is content to give away good part of his estate merely to exercise a vertue in obedience to God. He will give it if Christ call for it, who gives it if the poor call for it. He is well secur'd from feeding pride, excesses, and the other sins of fulness with his plenty, who gives all superfluities away to feed the hungry, his wealth is otherwise employed than in ministering to vice: and however 'tis certain his heart is taken off from the sins that are occasioned by riches, who heartily gives away the occasion of those sins; and tho the gate of Heaven be as strait as any needle's eie, yet this wealthy Man, this Camel in one sense of the word as it do's signify a cable rope, when his wealth is divided thus and scattered, when the rope is separated into little threads, then it will go thro the straitest needle's eie, and this rich man enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

And here were argument enough for the triumphs of comfort to an heart that can discern this sign of his Election, this fruit of the Holy Spirit, this instance of *like-mindedness* to Christ, this assurance of his conquest over that same Enemy, which is the Fleshes auxiliary, and the Devil's instrument, without which neither of them could much prevail upon us; for they do it by the aids the World do's bring, by the temptations and the baits which it do's minister. A consequent fit for Christ to glory in, *I have overcome the World*, saith he, Matt. 16. 33. and truly if any man, the religiously sincerely bountiful man hath don so to a great degree. He hath unglued his heart from it, they part with ease; you see how he distributes it, and throws it from him: and this is sure encouragement enough to set you upon searching whether you can find this Evidence within you, if it were not a certain sign also of more things, a sign of particular evidences and effects of having overcome the world.

For first, it is a sign of a perfect contentedness in ones condition; for apparently he is not unsatisfied with what he hath, who not only is content, but who contrives to have less, and gives away good part of what he hath. He cannot be discontented that he hath no more than he hath, who is resolved not to have so much, but searches for occasions to distribute what he hath. And if this be an infallible sign of a contented mind, (still I speak of the liberal heart, not only of a scattering hand,) it is an evidence of the greatest happiness in this world; for God hath prescribed one certain remedy for all the evils in the world, a contented heart. This is the only aim of all the arts and all the plenty of the world, it is for this alone men dig the mines of treasures, search the whole circuit of delights, run thro the hurry of an universe of pleasures, wherein, God knows, they seldom find it, but all intend only content. Whether they would be great or rich, or be luxurious, or every thing, it is because they seek content in these things; which he that hath in whatsoever state he be, he hath the scope, the price of all the treasures in the world, he hath the sum and comprehension of its felici-

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ties, which therefore the liberal heart hath the sure sign of: yea in this he hath the certain evidence of *S. Pauls* temper that he so much exults in, Phil. 4. 11, 12, 13. *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where, and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things thro Christ which strengtheneth me.*

Secondly he hath an evidence, that he is freed from envy, and those black disturbing passions that attend it. For certainly he do's not envy other mens greater condition, who willingly diminisheth his own. I am not troubled others coffers are more full than mine, when out of choice I emty mine, and rather chuse to lay up my revenues in the bowels of the poor. I do not envy their richer furniture, when I give mine away to furnish needy laboring families, and change the clothings of my roomes into the clothing of the cold bare Christians; and I can much more calmly see my chambers naked, than Christ's members. I have no emulations at the full plenties of other mens provisions; for why should I, when I send away my own provisions to chear the hungry, to make the hearts of famishing souls rejoice? If I have not so many plenties in my dining Room, yet I make more feasts in the cottages, where every alms is a feast. 'Tis certain he that will not use what he hath to his own interests and advantages, but gives them to advantage others, cannot envy the advantages of others: so that he is free from envy, that rottenness of the bones, that consumption of the soul and body too, that which makes every other man's prosperity his own torment, and tho he have a kind of malice wherefoere he sees any thing of flourish or of excellency, yet by all those malices he only strives to vex himself; from this the liberal heart is clear.

Thirdly from Covetousness also, and all the griping and injurious passions that are in its train: for it is certain he cannot be inclin'd to do ill to others for his own advantage, who out of choice parts with his own advantages, that he may do good to others. And indeed I need not prove this; for that a man should be bountiful-hearted and covetous-minded is a contradiction. So that we see the man hath a certain Evidence of being of a contented spirit, and being free from envy and from covetousness, which to be free from will appear to be the great ingredients of a Christian, when you shall see that those three qualities of discontent and envy and of covetousness are the fountains of all the most un-Christian vices of the soul; which was the last Proposition from the later part of the words, *For if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.* That, as I prov'd, do's signify, if thy heart be discontented and unsatisfied in its own condition, apt to envy another's prosperity, and covetous of greater things than it possesses, the whole life will be full of most un-Christian actions; they will betray the man, and fill him full of all iniquity. A subject this of a most vast extent, and truly worth considering and staying on: but I shall only point at things, and shew you how they are so in a word; for I will dwell no

longer on this Theme. First then discontent in ones condition is the Mother of many provocations of God: for

1. It teems with many murmurs and rebellions of heart against the dispositions of God's Providence. You must not think, Beloved, that a discontented Soul is only unwise, tho truly so he be to great degrees. He whom a tempest storms in open field, on whom the rain beats and the wind, is sure a fool if he sit down and cry at it, and vex. What relief is it to him to vie shours of tears with those the clouds drop, to return the blasts of wind with sighs and murmurs, and storm at the tempest? Sure there is no one so unwise, but would make hast and seek for shelter rather, and not sit down to fret and weep at it. And yet that is the fashion of the discontented heart; if the least cross be upon their mind, their sad and troubled thoughts make it look very big, (as thick and misty air do's make all objects,) they fancy it insufferable, they look upon it as if God's *indignation did lie hard upon them, and he had vexed them with all his storms*: and in these storms why do they not flie to God for shelter, nor run under the shadow of his wings for refuge, but vex and cry at it, yea murmur and repine? And what an insolence is this to be angry at the Almighty, because he do's not govern the world as they would have him; to quarrel, because his Providence disposeth of events otherwise than they think is for their interests? Some are discontented when God takes from them any thing they did possess. Now since neither health, nor wealth, nor any other good is thine or from thy self, but only lent, vouchsafed during his pleasure and discretion, and whatsoever he takes from thee is only thy not enjoying any longer what is no way due to thee, when he in his wisdom and in his love also to discipline thee calls for what he lent thee. Is this occasion for a contest with the Lord? Must he lend thee his mercies, when his wisdom sees fit to do otherwise in order to the ends of Providence? What irreligious Rebellion is this, to have risings of heart against God's dispositions, to fall out with their Maker, if he will not lend them his mercies as long, and in as great degrees as they would have him? Others are discontented, because they are not in a better, higher, or more plentiful condition; and why do they not as well quarrel with God, because he did not make them Angels; for what they are is his mere gift, and more than their deservings? He was no more oblig'd to make thee what thou art, than he was bound to make thee a Cherubim or an Archangel: and must thou murmur at the Lord, because thou hast not the disposal of his gifts to lay them out in what degrees thou pleasest? It is the sin of both these discontents, that they do not submit their hearts cheerfully to God's disposals. They that do not so, *S. Peter* saies, are proud, and such as God resists and fights against. And surely then the discontented is a strange person that is proud towards God, and an unhappy person whom God resists and fights against.

2. He renounces his own Praiers; he begs of God, *thy will be don*, and yet do's murmur that it is so: and what a strange Petitioner

tioner is this, who repines if he be heard, and is vext that God do's grant his Praiers, is angry with the Lord because he do's what he desires? And then shall such a person ever hope that God should hear his Praiers at any time, who is displeas'd because the Lord do's not deny him?

3. All concupiscences are the effect of this; for because they are not satisfied with their own condition, they desire what is not their own: and so the breach of the tenth Commandment is the certain consequent of this disposition of mind, or indeed rather it is but several instances of forbidding discontentedness with our own condition; and in it, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife*, is not meant, thou shalt not desire to commit adultery with her; for that was forbidden in the seventh Commandment: but as thou shalt not covet his house, which do's not signify thou shalt not desire once to walk thro it, or to sit and dine in it, but thou shalt not desire the possession nor propriety of what is not thine own, shalt not desire it should be thy house, but be contented with thy lot; so here, thou shalt not be troubled that his wife or servant is not thy wife or servant, and think it as fit thy Neighbor should enjoy the comforts of a happy wife, if God have given him one, or the pleasures and splendors of an estate, or the advantages of a commodious servant, as thou dost think it fit thou shouldest enjoy what is thine; and not desire not only to be theif, but not the owner of them: be content with what is thine.

4. All the Seditions and Rebellions in the world, and those armies of Sins that attend them, that wage their wars, which are upheld by legions of villainies, as numerous as those of men, all the disturbances of States and Churches are but the effects of discontented spirits, men that were unsatisfied with their condition, desir'd a change, and car'd not by what means they compass it. They can charge thro seas of bloud and sin, over the faces of men and conscience to get out of the condition, which they are not well content with.

I could assign more sins that do attend a discontented heart, when it hath opportunity to break into them: all the effects of anger, and of malice, and of concupiscence, and a whole shole of others are in its train, but that I must reserve one word for Envy.

2. Envy, to say all in one word, however slight a thing we may esteem it. For to envy at another person's having better qualities, or greater dignities, or richer furnitures, or wider estates, or handfomer provisions, this we think do's no mischief to the persons, and therefore is no crying crime. Yet besides that it is more unjust than hatred or than malice, for these have still pretences that do look like reason. I cannot hate a man, but because he do's me some wrong, and that is some reason; for I hate his injustice: but envy hath not any least pretence. Is it a wrong to me, because that person is better qualified, or better endowed? Is he unjust because he is rich, or learned, or well provided? and yet for this I envy him. Besides this, I say, to stab it with one thrust, Envy hath all the vices and all the ruins in the world
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for its issue, all sin and all damnation is its brood. The Devil envied man's felicity, and therefore temted him, and so man lost Original Righteousness, and he lost Paradise; and he envies his recovery by Christ, and therefore temts him still until he ruin him eternally. Whatever guilt, and whatever misery is in the world, hence it springs, it is a feind-like devilish humor. And now would you take the prospect of these two qualities, discontent and envy. Lucifer was not satisfied with his condition, and he was therefore cast from Heaven, and all his fellow Angels became Devils; and then he envied man's condition, and chang'd his Paradise into everlasting misery. These two qualities rob'd Heaven it self of those inhabitants that should have fill'd it, and the Son of God himself, and peopled Hell; it made Angels become Feinds, it made God die, and made men damn'd, and there is enough for that.

3. Covetousness, I am sure I can say no more of that, than what S. Paul hath said, nor more to my purpose, 1. Tim. 6. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *Godliness with contentment is great gain; for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out, and having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich, fall into a temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition: for the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves thro with many sorrows.*

And oh that three such dismal qualities with their accursed trains should breed in that same little part, the eie! An *evil eie* is the womb wherein they are conceiv'd, and if that one small faculty be so fruitful in guilt and in destructions, how shall we reckon the whole man? *Miserable men that we are, who shall deliver us from a whole body of death; and from the state of those deaths, and from darkness, in which this evil eie engages us?* A darkness which our Savior could not otherwise exprets, but by astonishment, *How great is that darkness!* A darkness great indeed, because 'tis wilfully incurable, no state do's so withstand the light as this. The Sun of Righteousness, the Day-spring from on high, that came to visit us, could strike the light thro darkness, and make the shadow of death bright Luke 1. 79. that did shed light, that was a glory, Luke 2. 32. could not yet break in upon a Country clouded with this humor: his Miracles and he were both desired to withdraw, could have no least Reception, when interest and profit came to be toucht; and a Legion of Devils, that did plot together, could contrive no surer means to keep out Christ himself, than by setting up an *evil eie* to look upon him and his Miracles, than by engaging this greedy affection against him, and that but in a small instance. We read a strange story Matt. 8. 28. Marke the contrivance and the policy; the Devils knowing that Christ would cast them out of the two possessed men, and by that Miracle so far shew forth his power, that it would probably bring all the Country to believe on him, they desir'd to prevent this, and thereupon fall on this project, which might incense the men of that Country against him; and in order to

to it they besought Christ, that if he did cast them out, he would suffer them to go into the herd of Swine; and tho he seldom wrought any destructive Miracles, yet that the people might see the virulency of these Devils, how destructive they were, if not restrain'd by his omnipotent goodness, and so they might understand the mercy don to those that were possessed, and likewise see the mercy now approaching to their Country by the coming of Christ, if they will accept of it, and withal to try whether their love to their Swine was greater than that to their own souls, he permitted the Devils to go into the Swine, he would not restrain them, and they went into them. They who fed the Swine gave to the owners notice of their loss, and did let them know, as the Swine were drown on the one side, so two men possessed with Devils were recovered, and that Christ had don this since his coming thither. Hereupon the whole City, as being very much concern'd in that which had happen'd, came out to meet and see Jesus, who did such Miracles; and instead of being wrought on by his cure on the men to desire his continuance among them, the consideration of the loss of their Swine made them desire and beseech him that he would depart out of their Coasts. Behold an equal Enemy to Christ and all his Miracles, an Enemy that was too hard for them, even a little worldly advantage! The Senate of Heli hath no project like this to keep out Religion, as this making Religion thwart an interest; rather no Christianity, than abate gain or greatness, or any earthly satisfaction; rather the Swine, than Christ himself.

But we have a worse instance yet than this, and more comprehensive as to our purpose. An *evil eye* could not endure to see the Son of God alive, and when the second Person of the Godhead was to be betrayed and crucified, the Devil had no other passion to employ on that design, but these same, discontent and envy and a greedy mind, and all these but at little trifles. We find that *Judas* bore the purse, and *S. John* saies that he *robb'd it*, John 12. 6. was deceitful in the discharge of his office of relieving the poor. Now it happen'd that a woman spent a box of precious ointment upon Christ, at which *Judas* was discontent, and envied it his Master, Matt. 16. 8. Mark 14. 4, 5. he *murmur'd*, and had *indignation at it*, saies the places; his *evil eye* could not endure to see such a sum should pass his purse, (of which yet he could have purloin'd but very little, for the sum was not great) and missing that, for very envy (for it was immediatly upon it Mark 14. 10.) his own covetous heart by the Devil's suggestion put him upon his project of gain to make some advantage by delivering Christ to the hands of the *Jews*, and upon his consenting to this suggestion the Devil was permitted by God to have this power over him, *to enter into him*, John 13. 2. and doing so incited him to make a bargain with the Rulers of the *Sanhedrim*, their great Council, and with their Officers to deliver up Jesus unto them; and he yielding to his incitation, and after Christ's talking with him, and telling him distinctly of it, and the sin and danger attending it, Mark 14. 21. and his not

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yet relenting, the Devil entred into him again more forcibly than before, John 13. 27. hurried him to the speedy execution: and he went and *covenanted with them that he should have thirty shekels*, Matt. 26. 15. *και εταπησαν τον* Luke 22. 6. and thanked them, altho it were a low and a vile sum, as could be the price of a slave, Exod. 21. 32. yet *Judas* thank't them for the offer, so covetous he was and glad of an occasion to get mony. We see the Devil enters at an evil eie, if that be envious, Satan gets in strait at that eie himself in person, and he possesse hearts set upon gain: and then no wonder if the Kingdom of darkness be in such an heart, when as the King of Hell, the Devil dwells there. Satan entred into him, and when he was there, what design hath he to fill an heart with? nothing but that of getting mony, this is effect enough of his possession. The Devil hath don work enough in such a heart as he is entred into really, if he but make it set upon desire of mony, tho it be but a trifle of gain, but three pounds fifteen shillings. But, Lord God, what will not a worldly heart adventure on; what will not a mind undertake, which envies at another, and is greedy for it self? When such an one did set *Judas* upon betraying Christ for almost nothing: one vanity, one sport, one dress, one sin's engagement to damnation costs a man more, than what an envious covetous Soul did sell the Son of God, the Ransom of Mankind, the price of all the Souls in the whole world for, yea and was thankful for it too: so low, so sordid, and so base a soul it is that loves increase.

And now, my Brethren, there is no need that I should tell you, that you must bring no *evil eie* to the Lord's Table to see his body crucified, and his blood poured out in the Sacrament; no discontents, no murmurs, no envious intentions, nor covetous desires must come near that, for they were these betray'd him. If such a soul come thither, *Judas* is there again; the things that sold him come again to tear his body, and to shed his blood. And do you think that such shall be receiv'd and entertain'd by Christ? Oh no, the bread of the Sacrament will be their Sop; and not Christ, but the Devil enters into such. Oh sure no heart so fit to come to that same feast as the charitable; those that feed him, he will feed: and I could tell you, charity (the offertory I mean, an offering for the poor) was used as an essential part of the Sacrament, and was a service of so high esteem, that preparation was requir'd for it as for the Sacrament; and by the first Councils men guilty of gross sins might not offer, their charities would not be receiv'd by the Church. Yea and there was an excommunication from this duty, and to be excluded from bringing their gifts for the poor was a greater censure, than to be shut out from the Sermon or the Praiers. But these are things our world do's not take notice of, nor will understand; to be censur'd from liberality, and to be excommunicate from bounty, and that receiving of mens alms should be a grace and an indulgence to the givers, are talks that men now have no notions of, nor much care for. But let them be sure no time so proper for our relieving the members of Christ, as when the

the body of Christ is relieving us to life eternal; no occasion more urgent for us to contribute towards the clothing of the naked body of Christ, than when Christ is clothing us with the crimson glorious garment of his Righteousness; no opportunity more pressing than this to visit his sick members, than when he administering to us *φάρμακον αἰδουσις*: nothing do's preach Charity like a Sacrament, nor no Sacrament more than this at the time of his Incarnation, when the Son of God did so exhaust himself for us, as to emty immensity of God-head into a span of weak, poor, helpless flesh, to become really one of the meanest objects of compassion, one that had no revenue in the world but Charity; for while he liv'd he had not an hole to put his head in, nor when he died a grave to put his body in, but as thro all his life his sustenance was alms, so at his death his burying place was alms too, and yet this was the Heir of both the worlds. And this he did to settle us in an inheritance of infinite, eternal glory; and the approaching day began this state to him, a day sure to be reckon'd not with the riots, but with the charities of hospitality, with feasts not for our sins, but feasts for Christ, and for his members; feasts such as his own Table is fit to be the leading entertainment in.

O Lord, who hast taught us, that all our doings without Charity are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of Charity, the very bond of peace and of all vertues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee: grant this for thine onely Son Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen*

THE END.

ERRATA.



Vol. 1.

Page 4. line 15. for אֲדָבָר read אֲדָבָר. p. 5. l. 26. for meres r. metes. p. 19. l. 42. for no r. do. p. 23. l. 22. for an r. can. p. 50. l. 14. for delpute r. dispute. p. 51. l. 1. for of any of one kind r. of any one kind. p. 60. l. 33. after found r. them. p. 63. l. 7. for it is r. is it. p. 65. l. 6. read after evil ? p. 65. l. 49. for Palms read Pfalms. p. 66. l. 48. for but that r. than the. p. 70. l. 41. dele and. p. 77. l. 4. for cenlor r. cenler. p. 82. l. 1. for coactively r. coercively. p. 83. l. 14. for Antimonians r. Antinomians. p. 84. l. 13. for צמאד r. צמאד. p. 85. l. 6. dele that. p. 85. l. 41. for beleif r. disbeleif. p. 90. l. 41. for what r. when. p. 110. l. 43. for fallafaction r. satisfaction. p. 118. l. 24. before proved r. is. p. 119. l. 1. for breast r. beast. p. 123. Marg. for מַלְאָכִים r. מַלְאָכִים. p. 125. l. 31. for difference r. deference. p. 129. l. 29. for persecutions r. persecutors. p. 132. Marg. for Thomas r. Thomas. for precamus r. precamur. p. 133. Marg. read homagii for homigii, ordinat for ordinari. p. 171. l. 17. for אֲנִי לֹפֶשֶׁת r. אֲנִי לֹפֶשֶׁת. Marg. for Pl. 77. r. 78. p. 176. l. 31. for with r. which. p. 185. l. 18 dele re. p. 186. l. 24. dele to. p. 187. l. 2. for nor. now. p. 191. l. 17. for hns r. hns. p. 195. l. 11. dele is. p. 198. l. 35. for infalliable r. infallible. p. 201. marg. for feri r. fere. p. 203. l. 41. after other r. that. p. 205. l. 31. dele to. p. 206. l. 37. for immitate r. imitate. p. 210. marg. for יְחִמִּים r. יְחִמִּים. *ibid.* for יָד r. יָד. p. 212. l. 11. for powe'd read pour'd. p. 218. marg. for *lurien* r. *lurien*. p. 220. l. 6. for entettrain r. entertain. p. 221. marg. for צִדְקָה r. צִדְקָה. *ibid.* marg. r. Galatians. p. 221. l. 20. for St. Peter's r. St. Paul's. p. 229. l. 4. before man r. no. p. 236. l. 12. for where r. were. p. 238. l. 7. for liral r. liral.

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Page 11. line 2. for unto read unto. p. 26. l. 36. f. an r. and. p. 39. l. 27. f. renverfe r. reinverfe. p. 58. l. 33. place the Comma that is after Tenents, after government. p. 64. l. 16. after tenth r. v. l. 32. f. put r. puts. p. 73. l. 45. before arrive r. men. p. 74. l. 43. f. permitted r. permitted. p. 75. l. 21. before will r. that. p. 79. l. 4. dele the Comma after is. l. 22. dele the Comma after sacrifices. p. 86. l. 26. dele are. p. 88. l. 42. f. ad r. and. p. 104. l. 43. before is r. of. p. 110. l. 6. f. it r. I. p. 122. l. 34. after beleive dele the stop, and for That r. that. p. 133. l. 5. f. art r. are. p. 142. l. 20. f. one r. once. p. 150. l. 35. f. sins r. fires. p. 153. l. 3. dele the. p. 162. l. 14. f. solomn r. solemn. p. 171. l. 21. before heal dele to. p. 172. l. 11. f. measureis r. measures. p. 181. l. 20. f. fait hwich r. faith which. p. 199. l. 28. f. whom them r. them whom. p. 203. l. 36. f. kearkniog r. bearkning. p. 224. l. 40. for pceferib'dor. prescrib'd. p. 225. l. 40. f. nar. us. p. 238. l. 28. f. Statute r. Statutes. p. 244. l. 14. f. too r. to. p. 248. l. 16. f. too r. to. p. 256. l. 32. f. theis r. their. p. 262. l. 20. f. to all r. of all. p. 264. l. 35. f. 1 Pet. 14. 14. r. 4. 14. p. 267. l. 38. before answers r. he. l. 41. f. too r. to. p. 269. l. 37. f. obortive r. abortive. p. 270. l. 6. f. ense r. ense. p. 271. l. 1. u. f. ther. thee. p. 279. l. 4. f. pronunct r. pronounc. p. 292. l. 37. after my arm r. fall. p. 295. l. 12. before Kingdome r. his. p. 297. l. 47. before became r. he. p. 300. l. 24. f. Matt. 26. 33. r. John 16. 33.

